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Harris, Mrs. Meriam (Cole)

A

ROSARY FOR LENT;

OR,

DEVOTIONAL READINGS,

ORIGINAL AND COMPILED, BY THE AUTHOR OF
"RUTLEDGE.

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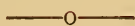
TO THE

REV. GEORGE H. HOUGHTON, D.D.,
RECTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION, NEW YORK.

FROM PARISHIONER TO PASTOR, WITH TRUE
GRATITUDE AND REVERENCE.



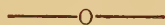
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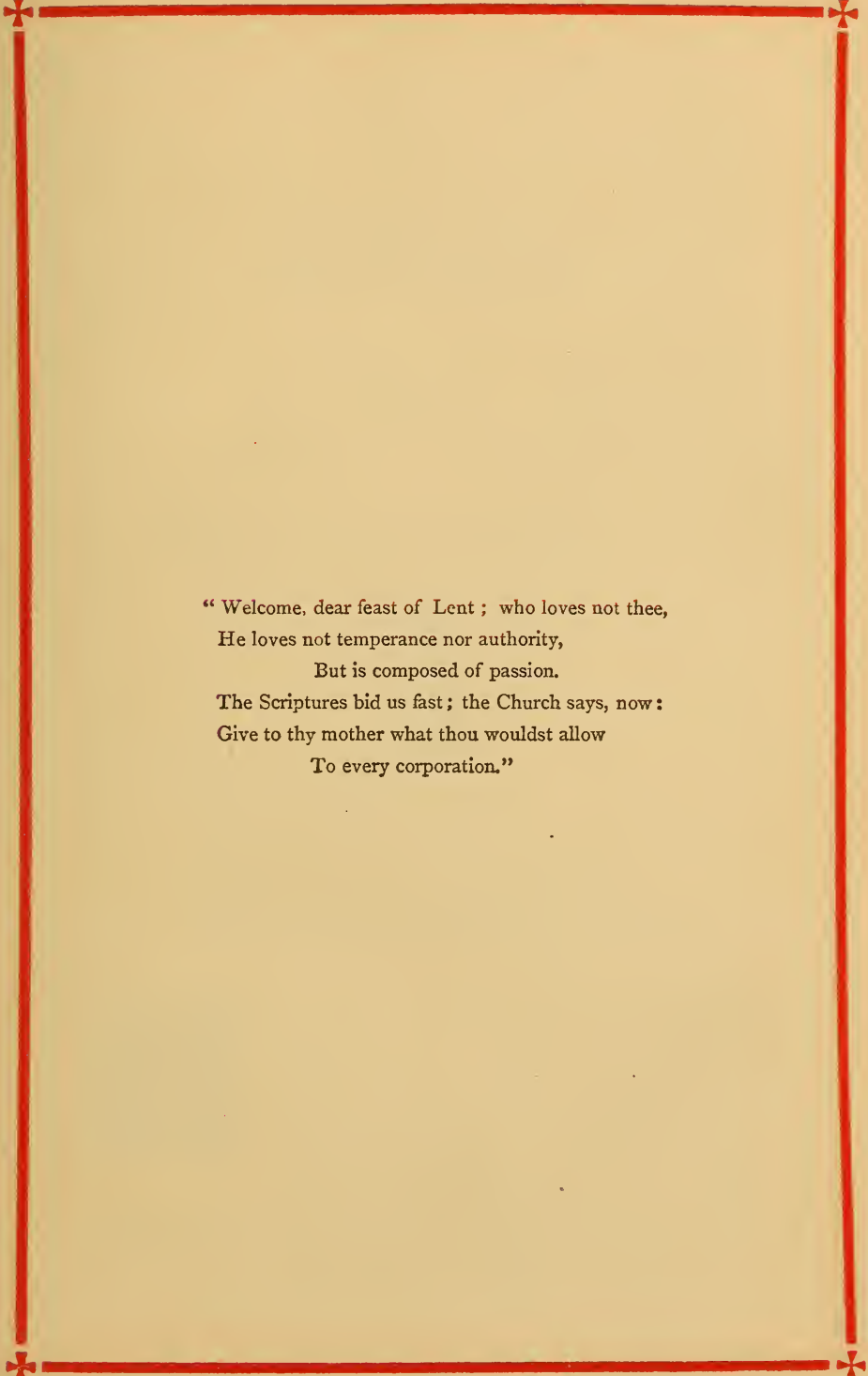
The compiler of this volume has very little of originality to claim for it, either in matter, or in manner of arrangement. She simply hopes that it may be a pleasant and perhaps profitable companion to those who always seek for thoughtful reading during Lent.

And if any, to whom Lent is unfamiliar, should be induced to take it up, because they have hitherto kindly been her readers, she would earnestly ask that they will not lay it aside, discouraged by a name, or by forms with which they are unacquainted. It is little beside names and forms which separate those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity ; has not each Christian made a step in advance when he has

overcome a prejudice, or thrown aside an uncharitable judgment?

If this "chaplet of spiritual roses," culled as it has been from many gardens, shall allure any to the garden of her own particular choice, it will be well: but if it inclines any others to the conviction that all gardens of the Lord are fair, it will be better.

NEW YORK, *December*, 1866.



“ Welcome, dear feast of Lent ; who loves not thee,
He loves not temperance nor authority,
But is composed of passion.
The Scriptures bid us fast ; the Church says, now :
Give to thy mother what thou wouldst allow
To every corporation.”



Ash-Wednesday.

Repentance.

“Lord, I have fasted, I have prayed,
And sackcloth has my girdle been ;
To purge my soul I have essayed
With hunger blank and vigil keen ;
O God of mercy ! why am I
Still haunted by the self I fly ?”

Sackcloth is a girdle good,
Oh, bind it round thee still ;
Fasting, it is angels’ food,
And Jesus loved the night air chill ;
Yet think not prayer and fast were given,
To make one step ’twixt earth and heaven.

John Henry Newman.



T was an ancient custom in England and in other places, to make use of the ashes of the branches that had been carried in the procession on Palm Sunday in the preceding year, to sprinkle the heads of the penitent faithful on Ash-Wednesday. These branches were

kept tied up in little faggots in the sacristy or vestry-room till the morning of Ash-Wednesday, when they were burnt and blessed again.

It was a very suggestive custom, this linking the fast of last year with the fast of this, a custom that might well have added many humiliating thoughts to those who participated in the services of the day. It was like sprinkling them with the ashes of their own good resolutions, their unfulfilled vows, their tarnished hopes. At the end of last year's fast, with what sobered eyes they had looked upon the world ; with what ardor they had turned heavenward ! On Palm Sunday, already in the shadow of the Holy Week, their hearts were soft with sorrow, anticipating the dreadful Friday, wise with the prayers and homilies of the long fast just ending, full of brave intentions and professions. "Prayers blown wide by winds of care," vows too pure to be fulfilled, hopes that had faded in the glare of worldliness—these were the ashes that were sprinkled on their heads. They must have had heavy hearts to begin a new Lent with the ashes of the last upon their foreheads—a new year with the failure of the old so fresh before them.

Ash-Wednesday is, from its nature, the gloomiest and coldest day of the Church year.

Good-Friday is thrilled through and through with love and holy hope, but Ash-Wednesday brings us face to face with ourselves, and "self-knowledge is knowledge of sin." We have turned from the world, and gone down resolutely into the crypt that lies below the cheerful structure of our every-day lives. We know that it is well to be there, but we have not yet learned to love its silence and solemnity. We see our sins, we dread their punishment, we feel the chill of the place. It would be perhaps a wise thing to spend a small part of Ash-Wednesday, but only a small part, in thinking of our sins, simply and solely of our sins, our failures, our shame. And calling all our imagination to help us, to think what it would be if, at the end of our life's Lent, there were to come no Good-Friday and no Easter. If we were just sinners, and we had no Christ. That thought might make us see more truly the sinfulness of sin. It might wring out more gratitude and penitence from us, and make us more glad to be Christians, even though stumbling, and back-sliding, and dull-minded Christians. For that, perhaps, we all are, in our own eyes and in God's, whatever our fellows may think of us. But disheartened Christians let us never be. Not with the Cross and the open grave before

us. For no matter how lost our year may seem to us, there will be something in it that Infinite Love will gather up and treasure. And the life within us springs up and grows we know not how. One year will not perfect us, nor two, nor three. But year after year, Lent after Lent, each one a step beyond the other, may bring us to where the perfect life joins this. Therefore let us keep the fast with hope.

Past guilt lies behind us, and is well forgotten. There is a way in which even sin may be banished from the memory. If a man looks forward to the evil he is going to commit, and satisfies himself that it is inevitable, and so treats it lightly, he is acting as a fatalist. But if a man partially does this, looking backward, feeling that sin when it is past has become part of God's universe, and is not to be wept over for ever, he only does that which the Giver of the Gospel permits him to do. Bad as the results have been in the world, of making light of sin, those of brooding over it too much have been worse. Remorse has done more harm than even hardihood. It was remorse which fixed

Judas in unalterable destiny ; it was remorse which filled the monasteries for ages with men and women whose lives became useless to their fellow-creatures. It is remorse which so remembers by-gone faults, as to paralyze the energies for doing Christ's work ; for when you break a Christian's spirit, it is all over with progress. Oh, we want everything that is hopeful and encouraging for our work, for God knows it is not an easy one. And, therefore, it is that the Gospel comes to the guiltiest of us all, at the very outset, with the inspiring news of pardon. You remember how Christ treated sin. Sin of oppression and hypocrisy, indignantly ; but sin of frailty—"Hath no man condemned thee?" "No man, Lord." "Neither do I condemn thee ; go and sin no more." As if he would bid us think more of what we may be than of what we have been. There was the wisdom of life in the proverb with which the widow of Tekoab pleaded for the restoration of Absalom from banishment before David. Absalom had slain his brother Amnon. Well, Amnon was dead before his time, but the severity of revenge could never bring him back again. "We must all die," said the wise woman, "and are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." Christian brethren, do not stop too

long to weep *over spilt water*. Forget your guilt,
and wait to see what Eternity has to say to it.
You have other work to do now.

Robertson.

What, fallen again? yet cheerful rise,
Thine Intercessor never dies.

Keble.

First Thursday.

Self-Examination.

By all means use sometimes to be alone.
Salute thyself : see what thy soul doth wear.
Dare to look in thy chest ; for 'tis thine own ;
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there.
Who cannot rest till he good fellows find,
He breaks up house, turns out of doors his mind.

Herbert.



BEFORE we depart out of the darkness of this world, let us kindle the lamp of knowledge, that we may not merely exchange temporal for eternal night. What knowledge have we ? We know that "the Lord cometh," but we know not when. Not all have even this knowledge. For think you that any would rejoice and make merry, still living in sin, did

they know or consider that the Lord comes? If they say so, they do not believe it, "for he who saith, I know Him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar." True knowledge works in the first place repentance and grief, changes laughter into weeping, joy into sorrow. In the second place, amendment; no longer are the members made instruments of unrighteousness, revelling is banished, pride mortified, and the body preserved in temperance and chastity. The Spirit guards every avenue of evil, directs its attention on every side; hence is born, thirdly, watchfulness. We begin to walk thoughtfully before our God, to examine ourselves carefully, that we offend not *wilfully*, in the least degree, the Majesty of Him with Whom we have to do.

Bernard.

When we are inquiring into the state of our minds, we should recollect that we are in the presence of God, to whom our most secret thoughts are open and naked; and therefore we should impartially compare our most secret actions by the standard of his laws; for though we may impose upon ourselves and others, we cannot deceive an omniscient God. We should consider also that we must soon appear before

the dreadful tribunal of God to render an account of all our thoughts, words, and actions. And we should endeavor to escape the terrors of that awful trial, by frequently reviewing our hearts and lives, and confessing our sins to God, that we may obtain, by repentance, his mercy and favor, through the prevailing intercession of his Son Jesus Christ.

We should supplicate the grace of God to enlighten us in the knowledge of ourselves, to expose to us our own unworthiness and guilt. We should try ourselves by some of the leading principles and duties of religion—whether we have frequent and serious thoughts of God—whether we view with lively gratitude and faith, the exalted plan of salvation through his Son Jesus Christ—whether we cherish firm and lively resolutions of obeying Him—whether we faithfully perform the duties of that station in which we are placed, both in reference to the public and our own private families—whether we are active and zealous in doing all the good in our power to the bodies and souls of men—in short, whether the service of God be our supreme aim and highest enjoyment. We should also consider the several aggravations of our transgressions—whether they were committed against the light of our minds, with the free

consent of our wills, and despite of the checks of our own conscience—whether they have been often repeated, and are transient acts or settled habits ; and we should carefully note the previous steps by which we have been led into sin, and the peculiar infirmity of our own character, that we may, for the future, be on our guard against temptation.

We should every evening direct to our own consciences such inquiries as the following : How have we spent the day ? What sins have we committed ? What duties have we omitted ? Have we regularly performed the duties of public and private devotion ? Have we embraced every opportunity which offered of doing good ? Has our intercourse with others been marked with candor and affability ? Have we avoided the vices of evil-speaking and slander, the bane of society ? Have we conducted our business with honesty and fidelity ? Have we improved usefully our leisure time ? Have our relaxations and amusements been confined within the bounds of Christian moderation ? What mercies have we received ; and how thankful have we been for them ? What temptations have we resisted ? What progress have we gained in overcoming, through divine grace, our sinful passions ? Have we this day cherished

constant sense of the presence and inspection of God, and lifted up our souls to Him in devout gratitude, as our Creator, Benefactor, Preserver, and Redeemer? Having thus reviewed the state of our minds and our conduct through the day, we should humbly supplicate the forgiveness of God for the sins which we have committed, and render Him the glory and praise of all our good and virtuous actions. We should, through divine grace, resolve on better obedience for the future; and should make reparation to our neighbor for whatever injuries we have done him in his person, property, or character.

The frequent examination of our hearts and lives makes us thoroughly acquainted with ourselves, a knowledge of the greatest importance. It prompts us to repentance, as the only remedy for the guilt which, by our sins, we have contracted. It disposes us to humility, from a lively sense of our frequent errors and miscarriages. It keeps us in a state of constant preparation for death, by making us careful to avoid all sin, and by exciting us to the practice of those holy graces and virtues which will prepare us for Heaven.

Bishop Hobart.

First Friday.

Example.

“For I have five brethren ; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.”

Five loving souls, each one as mine,
And each forevermore to be !
Each deed of each to thrill
For good or ill,
Along thine awful line,
Eternity !

Who for such burden may suffice ?
Who bear to think, how scornful tone,
Or word or glance too bold,
Or ill dream told,
May bar from Paradise
Our Master's own ?

We scatter seeds with careless hand,
And dream we ne'er shall see them more ;

But for a thousand years
Their fruit appears,
In weeds that mar the land,
Or healthful store.

The deeds we do, the words we say—
Into still air they seem to fleet ;
We count them ever past,
But they shall last ;
In the dread judgment they
And we shall meet !

I charge thee by the years gone by,
For the love's sake of brethren dear,
Keep thou the one true way
In work and play,
Lest in that world their cry
Of woe thou hear !

Lyra Innocentium.



F you be a *holy people*, you are also a royal *priesthood* ; if you be all God's saints, you are all God's priests ; and if you be His priests, it is your office to preach too ; as we by words, you by your holy works ; as we by contemplation, you by conversation ; as we by our doctrine, so you by your lives, are appointed by God to preach to one another ; and therefore every particular man must wash his own feet, look that he have *speciosos pedes*, that his example may

preach to others, for this is truly a regal priesthood, not to work upon others by words but by actions. If we love one another, as Christ loved us, we must *wash one another's feet*, as He commanded His apostles ; there is a priestly duty lies upon every man, brotherly to reprehend a brother whom he sees trampling in foul ways, wallowing in foul sins.

Donne.

Our many deeds, the thoughts that we have thought,
They go out from us, thronging every hour ;
And in them all is folded up a power
That on the earth doth move them to and fro ;
And mighty are the marvels they have wrought,
In hearts we know not, and may never know !
Our actions travel, and are veiled ; and yet
We sometimes catch a fearful glimpse of one,
When out of sight its march hath well nigh gone ;
An unveiled thing which we can ne'er forget !
All sins it gathers up into its course,
And they do grow with it, and are its force ;
One day, with dizzy speed, that thing shall come,
Recoiling on the heart that was its home.

Faber.

Nothing is so infectious as example. If you wish your neighbors to see what Jesus Christ is like, let them see what He can make *you* like. If you wish them to know how God's love is ready to save them from their sins, let them

see His love save *you* from your sins. If you wish them to see God's tender care in every blessing and every sorrow they have, why let them see you thanking God for every sorrow and every blessing you have. Example is everything. One good man—one man who does not put his religion on once a week with his Sunday coat, but wears it for his working dress, and lets the thought of God grow into him, and through and through him, till everything he says and does becomes religious, that man is worth a ton of sermons—he is a living Gospel—he comes in the spirit and power of Elias—he is the image of God. And men see his good works, and admire them in spite of themselves, and see that they are godlike, and that God's grace is no dream, but that the Holy Spirit is still among men, and that all nobleness and manliness is His gift, His stamp, His picture ; and so they get a glimpse of God again in His saints and heroes, and glorify their Father who is in Heaven.

Kingsley.

First Saturday.

Distractions in Prayer.

Ah! dearest Lord, I cannot pray,
My fancy is not free ;
Unmannerly distractions come,
And force my thoughts from Thee.

The world that looks so dull all day,
Glow bright on me at prayer,
And plans that ask no thought but then,
Wake up and meet me there.

All nature one full fountain seems,
Of dreamy sight and sound,
Which, when I kneel, breaks up its deeps,
And makes a deluge round.

Old voices murmur in my ear,
New hopes start into life,
And Past and Future gaily blend
In one bewitching strife.

My very flesh has restless fits,
My changeful limbs conspire
With all these phantoms of the mind,
My inner self to tire.

I cannot pray ; yet, Lord ! Thou knowest
The pain it is to me,
To have my vainly struggling thoughts
Thus torn away from Thee.

Prayer was not meant for luxury
Or selfish pastime sweet ;
'Tis the prostrate creature's place
At his Creator's feet.

Had I, dear Lord, no pleasure found
But in the thought of Thee ;
Prayer would have come unsought and been
A truer liberty.

Yet Thou art oft most present, Lord,
In weak, distracted prayer ;
The sinner out of heart with self,
Most often finds Thee there.

For prayer that humbles, sets the soul
From all illusions free ;
And teaches it how utterly,
Dear Lord, it hangs on Thee.

The heart that on self-sacrifice
Is covetously bent,
Will bless Thy chastening hand that makes
Its prayer, its punishment.

My Saviour, why should I complain,
 And why fear aught but sin?
 Distractions are but outward things;
 Thy peace dwells far within.

These surface troubles come and go,
 Like ruffings of the sea;
 The deeper depth is out of reach,
 To all, my God, but Thee.

Faber.



YOU ask me how you are to act in order to bring your spirit straight to God, without looking either to the right hand or to the left.

This proposition is so much the more pleasing to me because it carries its own answer with it. You must do as you say, go straight to God, without looking to the right hand or to the left.

I see well enough that this is not what you ask me; but your question is, how you ought to act, so to strengthen your spirit in God, that nothing may be able to detach it from Him.

Two things are necessary for this, death and salvation; for after that there will be no more separation, and your spirit will be indissolubly attached and united to its God.

You tell me that this, again, is not what you ask; but what you are to do in order to prevent

the least fly from drawing away your spirit from God, as happens but too often.

You apparently mean to say, the least distraction ; but you ought to know that the least fly of distraction does not draw away your spirit from God, for nothing draws us away from God but sin ; and the resolution which we have made in the morning to keep our spirit united to God, and attentive to His presence, makes us remain there always, even when we sleep, since we do so in the name of God, and according to His most holy will.

Even venial sins are not capable of turning us aside from the path which conducts us to God. They doubtless stop us somewhat in our road ; but they do not turn us aside from it, and much less do simple distractions.

As for mental prayer, it is not the less profitable or less pleasing to God for having in it many distractions ; on the contrary, it will perhaps be more profitable to us than if we had much consolation, because there is thus more labor in it ; provided, nevertheless, that we have the will to draw ourselves away from these distractions, and that we do not voluntarily allow our minds to rest upon them.

It is the same with the trouble which we have all through the day in fixing our mind on God

and heavenly things, provided that we take pains to recal our mind, and to hinder it from running after these flies, persevering with patience, and not tiring of our toil, which is endured for the love of God.

A careful distinction must be made between God and the feeling of God ; between faith and the feeling of faith. A person who is going to suffer martyrdom for God does not always think upon God during that time ; and although he has not at that moment the feeling of faith, he does not for all that fail to merit it, or to make an act of very great love. It is the same with the presence of God ; we must be contented with considering that He is our God, and that we are His feeble creatures, unworthy of this honor, as St. Francis did, who passed a whole night saying to God, "Who art Thou, and who am I ?"

There is nothing to fear. At the death of our sweet Jesus He made darkness to come upon the earth. I think that Magdalen, who was with the Blessed Virgin, was very mortified that she was no longer able to see her dear Lord : she was nevertheless as near to Him as before. Let it alone ; all is going on right. As much darkness as you please, but nevertheless we are near the light ; as much helplessness as you please, but we are at the feet of the Almighty.

Live Jesus! may we never separate ourselves from Him, whether in darkness or in light.

You do not know what I think of your asking me for remedies ; it is, that I do not remember that our Lord ever gave command to heal the head of the daughter of Zion, but only her heart. No, doubtless, he never said, "Speak ye to the head of Jerusalem," but "*Speak ye to the heart of Ferusalem.*" Your heart is in good order, since your resolutions in it are living.

St. Francis de Sales.

Fain would my thoughts fly up to Thee,
Thy peace, sweet Lord, to find ;
But when I offer, still the world
Lays clogs upon my mind.

Sometimes I climb a little way,
And thence look down below ;
How nothing there, do all things seem,
That here make such a show !

Then round about I turn my eyes
To feast my hungry sight ;
I meet with Heaven in everything,
In everything delight.

I see Thy wisdom ruling all,
And it with joy admire ;

I see myself among such hopes
As set my heart on fire.

When I have thus triumphed awhile,
And think to build my nest,
Some cross conceits come fluttering by
And interrupt my rest.

Then to the earth again I fall,
And from my low dust cry,
'Twas not in my wing, Lord, but Thine
That I got up so high.

And now, my God, whether I rise,
Or still lie down in dust,
Both I submit to Thy blest will,
In both, on Thee I trust.

Guide Thou my way, who art Thyself
My everlasting end,
That every step, or swift or slow,
Still to Thyself may tend !

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
One Consubstantial Three,
All highest praise, all humblest love,
Now and forever be ! Amen.

John Austin.

First Sunday.

Fasting.

'Tis true, we cannot reach Christ's fortieth day,
Yet to go part of that religious way,
Is better than to rest ;
We cannot reach our Saviour's purity,
Yet are we bid, " Be holy e'en as He,"
In both let's do our best.

Who goeth in the way which Christ hath gone,
Is much more sure to meet with Him, than one
That travelleth by-ways.
Perhaps my God, though He be far before,
May turn and take me by the hand ; and more,
May strengthen my decays.

Yet, Lord, instruct us to improve our fast
By starving sin, and taking such repast
As may our faults control :

That every man may revel at his door,
Not in his parlor ; banqueting the poor,
And among those his soul.

Herbert.



E that undertakes to enumerate the benefits of fasting may, in the next page, also reckon all the benefits of physic ; for fasting is not to be commended as a duty, but as an instrument ; and in that sense no man can reprove it or undervalue it, but he that knows neither spiritual arts nor spiritual necessities. But by the doctors of the Church it is called the nourishment of prayer, the restraint of lust, the wings of the soul, the diet of angels, the instrument of humility and self-denial, the purification of the spirit ; and the paleness and meagreness of visage which is consequent to the daily fast of great mortifiers is, by St. Basil, said to be the mark in the forehead, which the angel observed, when he signed the saints in the forehead to escape the wrath of God. "The soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, and the eyes that fail, and the hungry soul, shall give Thee praise and righteousness, O Lord !"

Bishop Taylor.

When the pious Christian observes days of abstinence with proper dispositions, when he looks upon fasting, not as an essential part of religion, but simply as auxiliary to the due performance of religious acts, to the mortifying and subduing of criminal appetites and passions, and to the spiritualizing of the soul : when he sets apart for prayer, self-examination, and contrition, and for the receiving of religious instruction and reproof, that time which Christians have in general allotted for these ends ; when he thus complies with the directions of his lawful superiors, and of ancient canons, and with the usages of the church of which he is a member ; when he does not hope by abstinence at one season to compound for excess at another ; when he is fully persuaded that neither one day nor one meal is holier or cleaner than another ; yet on certain days chooses to abstain from certain meats, not because they are unlawful, but because they are less subservient to keeping the body under subjection ; when in things indifferent he neither rigorously confines himself to rules, nor adopts what might tend either to trench on Christian liberty or to open a door to licentiousness ; when he thus keeps the appointed fasts, his practice corresponds with the intentions of our church and the injunctions of the Gospel ; with what our

Saviour regulated by his precepts, and recommended by his example, and such a fast we cannot hesitate to pronounce will be acceptable to the Lord.

Shepherd.

He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend.
Eternity mourns that.

Philip von Artevelde.

Now are the days of humblest prayer,
When consciences to God lie bare,
And mercy most delights to spare.
Oh, hearken when we cry,
Chastise us with Thy fear;
Yet, Father! in the multitude
Of Thy compassions, hear!

Now is the season; wisely long,
Of sadder thoughts and graver song,
When ailing souls grow well and strong.
Oh, hearken when we cry,
Chastise us with Thy fear,
Yet, Father! in the multitude
Of Thy compassions, hear!

The feast of penance! Oh, so bright
With true conversion's heavenly light,
Like sunrise after stormy night!

Oh, hearken when we cry,
Chastise us with Thy fear ;
Yet, Father ! in the multitude
Of Thy compassions, hear !

We who have loved the world must learn
Upon that world our backs to turn,
And with the love of God to burn.

Oh, hearken when we cry,
Chastise us with Thy fear ;
Yet, Father ! in the multitude
Of Thy compassions, hear !

Faber

First Monday.

Abandonment to the Will of God.

Now, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live ;
To love and serve Thee is my share,
And this Thy grace must give.

If death shall bruise this springing seed
Before it come to fruit,
The will with Thee goes for the deed,
Thy life was in the root.

Would I long bear my heavy load,
And keep my sorrows long ?
Would I long sin against my God,
And His dear mercy wrong ?

How much is sinful flesh my foe,
That doth my soul pervert ;
To linger here in sin and woe,
And steal from God my heart ?

Christ leads me through no darker rooms
Than he went through before ;
He that unto God's kingdom comes,
Must enter by this door.

Come, Lord, when grace hath made me meet
Thy blessed face to see ;
For if Thy work on earth be sweet,
What will Thy glory be ?

Then I shall end my sad complaints,
And weary sinful days ;
And join with the triumphant saints
That sing Jehovah's praise.

My knowledge of that life is small ;
The eye of faith is dim ;
But it's enough that Christ knows all,
And I shall be with Him.

Baxter.



HIS abandonment is the virtue of virtues ; it is the cream of charity, the odor of humility, the reward, as I think, of patience, and the fruit of perseverance. Great is this virtue, and only worthy to be practised by the dearest children of God.

"Father," said our sweet Saviour on the cross, "*into Thy hands I commend my spirit*" (St. Luke xxiii. 46). It is true, He meant to say that it is consummated, and that "*I have finished the work*

which Thou gavest me to do" (St. John xix. 30 ; xvii. 4) ; but, nevertheless, if it is Thy will that I remain still upon this cross to suffer yet more, I am content therewith ; I resign my spirit into Thy hands ; Thou canst do with it as it shall please thee.

We ought to do the same on all occasions, whether it be that we suffer, or that we enjoy some contentment, thus allowing the Divine Will to lead us according to its good pleasure, without ever allowing ourselves to be engaged with our own particular will.

Our Lord loves with an extremely tender love those who thus abandon themselves totally to His fatherly care, allowing themselves to be governed by His good Providence, without considering whether the effects of that Providence will be sweet or bitter to them ; being entirely assured that nothing can possibly be sent to them from that fatherly heart which is not for their good and profit, provided they have put their whole confidence in Him, and say with a good heart, My Father, I resign my spirit, my soul, my body, and all that I have into Thy hands to do with them in Thy love, whatever shall please Thee.

Sometimes our Lord wills that souls chosen for the service of His Divine Majesty, should

nourish themselves with a firm and inviolable resolution of persevering to follow Him in the midst of disgusts, drynesses, dislikes, and bitternesses of the spiritual life, without consolations, favors, tendernesses, or sweetnesses, and that they should believe themselves worthy of nothing else ; thus following the Divine Saviour with the fine point of the spirit, without anything to rest upon but His divine will, which so wills it. And in this way I desire that we should walk.

For never shall we be reduced to such an extremity as not to be able always to diffuse before the Divine Majesty the perfumes of a holy submission to His most holy will, and of a continual promise never to consent to offend Him.

It is very true that we must have a great confidence thus to abandon ourselves without reserve to Divine Providence ; but also, when we do entirely abandon ourselves, our Lord takes care of everything, and conducts everything. But if we reserve to ourselves anything about which we have not confidence in Him, He leaves us, as though he said, You think yourself wise enough to manage this affair without me ; I allow you to guide it ; you shall see what will come of it in the end.

Magdalene, who was entirely abandoned to our Lord, remained at His feet, and listened to

Him as long as He spoke ; and when He ceased to speak, she also ceased to hear, but she stirred not from His side ; so does this soul, abandoned to our Lord, abide within His arms, like an infant in its mother's bosom, who, when she puts him down to walk, walks till his mother again takes him up, and, when she would carry him, suffers her to do so. He knows not, and thinks not whither he is going, but he suffers himself to be carried or taken whither his mother pleases. Just in the same manner does this soul, loving the will of the good pleasure of God in all that happens to it, suffer itself to be carried, and nevertheless walks, doing with great care whatever belongs to the expressed will of God.

You said just now, that if it be really possible for our will to be so dead in our Lord, we should no longer know what we will or what we do not will.

But I answer, that it never happens, however abandoned to God we may be, that our liberty does not remain entire ; whence there always reaches us some desire and some will ; but these are not absolute wills to forward desires ; and immediately the soul abandoned to the good pleasure of God perceives them, that moment she makes them die in the will of God.

You wish, further, to know what foundation this perfect abandonment ought to have.

It ought to be founded on the infinite goodness of God, and on the merits of the death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, with this condition, that we have, and know we have, within us an entire and firm resolution of being altogether in God's hands, and by abandoning ourselves wholly, and without any reserve, to His Divine Providence.

I desire you, however, to observe, that I do not say that we must feel this resolution, but only that we must have it, and know we have it within us; because we ought not to amuse ourselves with thinking what we feel or what we do not feel; and the more because most of our sentiments and satisfactions are merely the amusements of our self-love.

Nor must you take me to mean, that in all these things we never have desires contrary to the will of God, or that our nature is not repugnant to the events of His good pleasure; for that may often happen. The virtues I speak of have their abode in the superior part of the soul; the inferior part ordinarily understands nothing of them; we must make no account of it; but without regarding what it wills we must embrace that Divine will, and unite ourselves to

it, in spite of such inclinations. Few arrive at that degree of perfect riddance of themselves ; but we ought nevertheless all to aim at it, each according to our vocation and capacity.

Here is the great maxim. We must look to what God wills, and discerning his will, we must attempt to fulfil it cheerfully or at least courageously ; and not only that, but we must love this will of God, and the obligation which result from it, even were it to herd swine all our life, and to do the most abject things in the world. For in whatever service God puts us, that ought to be all one to us. Here is the very centre of the target of perfection at which we ought all to aim ; whoever approaches it the nearest is the winner of the prize. Courage, I implore you. Accustom your will, little by little, to follow that of God, to whatever place it leads you. Let your will feel sharply goaded when your conscience shall say to it, God wills it.

Your meditation is good. Only but stay faithful to abide near God in this sweet and tranquil attention of heart, and in this sweet acquiescence with His holy will ; for all this is pleasing to Him. Avoid any violent application of the understanding, since such is injurious to you, and busy yourself around your beloved object

with the affections, in all simplicity, and as sweetly as you can.

It cannot be helped that the understanding now and then makes attempts to apply itself, and there is no occasion to be on the watch to hinder it from doing so, for that would only be a distraction to you ; but you ought to content yourself, when you perceive it, with returning simply to the actions of the will. To keep oneself in the presence of God, and to place oneself in the presence of God, are, in my opinion, two things ; for in order to place oneself there, one ought to withdraw one's soul from every other object, and render it actually attentive to this presence ; but after one has placed oneself in it, one always keeps oneself in it, so long as, either by the understanding or by the will, one performs actions towards God ; whether regarding Him, or regarding something else for the love of Him ; or regarding nothing, but speaking to Him ; or neither regarding Him nor speaking to Him, but simply abiding where He has placed us.

And when to this simple abiding there is added some feeling that we are God's, and that He is our all, we ought to render great thanks to His goodness for this. If a statue, which has been placed in a niche or in the midst of a hall,

had the power of speech, and were asked the question, "Wherefore art thou there?" "Because," it would reply, "the statuary, my master, placed me here." "Wherefore dost thou not move?" "Because he wills that I should remain in my place immovably." "What use art thou of, then? What advantage dost thou derive from being thus stationary?" "It is not for my own service that I am here; it is to serve and obey the will of my master." "But dost thou not see him?" "No," the statue would reply; "but he sees me, and takes pleasure in knowing that I am where he has placed me." "But wouldst not thou be glad to have the power of moving, in order to go nearer to him?" "Not unless he commanded me to do so." "Desirest thou then nothing?" "No; for I am where my master has placed me; and his pleasure is the only contentment of my being."

My God, how happy we are when we will to love our Lord! Let us love Him, then, well; and let us not set ourselves to consider too much in detail what we do for His love, provided that we know that we never will to do anything except for His love.

For myself, I think that we keep ourselves in the presence of God even in sleep; for we betake ourselves to sleep in His sight, at His

good pleasure, and by His will ; and when we wake, we find that He is there, nigh unto us ; He has not moved, nor have we. We have, then, kept ourselves in His presence, though with our eyes closed.

St. Francis de Sales.

We observe here a great truth—the evil of self-consciousness. This self-consciousness is all evil. He who can dwell on this and that symptom of his moral nature is already diseased. We are too much haunted by ourselves ; we project the spectral shadow of ourselves on everything around us. And then comes in the gospel to rescue us from this selfishness. Redemption is this : to forget self in God. Does not the mother forget herself for a time in the child ; the loyal man in his strong feelings of devotion for his sovereign ? So does the Christian forget himself in the feeling that he has to live here for the performance of the will of God.

Robertson.

First Tuesday.

Diligence.

Every present holds a future in it
Could we read its bosom secret right,
Could we see the golden clue and win it,
Lay our hand to work with heart and might.

True it is, we shall not live in story,
But we may be waves within a tide,
Help the human flood to near the glory
That shall shine when we have toiled and died.

Therefore, though few praise, or help, or heed us,
Let us work with head or heart or hand ;
For we know the future ages need us,
We must help our time to take its stand ;—

That the after day may make beginning
Where our present labor hath its end ;
So each age, by that before it winning,
To the following help in turn shall lend.

Each single struggle hath its far vibration,
Working results that work results again ;
Failure and death are no annihilation,
Our tears, absorbed, will make some future rain.

Let us toil on ; the work we leave behind us,
Though incomplete, God's hand will yet embalm,
And use it some way ; and the news will find us
In Heaven above, and sweeten endless calm.



WE have certain work to do for our bread, and that is to be done strenuously ; other work to do for our delight, and that is to be done heartily ; neither is to be done by halves or shifts, but with a will ; and what is not worth this effort is not to be done at all. There is dreaming enough, and earthiness enough, and sensuality enough in human existence, without our turning the few glowing minutes of it into mechanism ; and since our life must at the best be but a vapor that appears but for a little time and then vanishes away, let it at least appear as a cloud in the height of Heaven, not as the thick darkness that broods over the blast of the furnace and rolling of the wheel.

Ruskin.

The most voluptuous and loose person breathing were he but tied to follow his hawks and his hounds, his dice and his courtships every day, would find it the greatest torment and calamity that could befall him ; he would fly to the mines and galleys for his recreation, and to the spade and the mattock for a diversion from the misery of a continual unintermitted pleasure. But, on the contrary, the providence of God has so ordered the course of things, that there is no action, the usefulness of which has made it the matter of duty and of a profession, but a man may bear the continual pursuit of it without loathing and satiety. The same shop and trade that employs a man in his youth, employs him also in his age. Every morning he rises fresh to his hammer and his anvil ; he passes the day singing ; custom has naturalized his labor to him ; his shop is his element, and he cannot, with any enjoyment of himself, live out of it.

Robert South.

There are no such prevalent workmen as sedulity and diligence. A man would wonder at the mighty things which have been done by degrees and gentle augmentations. Diligence and moderation are the best steps, whereby to climb to

any excellency. Nay it is rare if there be any other way. The Heavens send not down their rain in floods, but by drops and dewy distillations. A man is neither good, nor wise, nor rich, at once ; yet softly, creeping up these hills, he shall every day better his prospect ; till at last he gains the top. Now he learns a virtue, and then he damns a vice. An hour in a day may much profit a man in his study when he makes it stint and custom. Every year something laid up, may in time make a stock great. Nay, if a man does but save, he shall increase ; and though when the gains are scattered, they be next to nothing, yet together they will swell the heap. He that has the patience to attend small profits, may quickly grow to thrive and purchase : they be easier to accomplish, and come thicker. So he that from every thing collects somewhat, shall in time get a treasury of wisdom. And when all is done, for man, this is the best way. It is for God, and for Omnipotency, to do mighty things in a moment : but *degreely* to grow to greatness, is the course that He hath left for man.

Felltham.

Since thou hast an alarum in thy breast, which tells thee thou hast a living spirit in thee above two thousand times in a hour, dull not away thy days in slothful supinity and the tediousness of doing nothing. To strenuous minds there is an inquietude in overquietness, and no laboriousness in labor ; and to tread a mile after the slow pace of a snail or the heavy measure of the lazy of Brazilia, were a most tiring penance, and worse than a race of some furlongs at the Olympics. The rapid courses of the heavenly bodies are rather imitable by our thoughts, than our corporeal motions : yet the solemn motions of our lives amount unto a greater measure than is commonly apprehended.

Think not there is a lion in the way, nor walk with leaden sandals in the paths of goodness.

Sir Thomas Browne.

Second Wednesday.

Content.

Some murmur when their sky is clear,
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
And some with thankful love are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy, gild
The darkness of their night.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied.
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid,

(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made.

Trench.



CONTENT can never dwell but in a meek and quiet soul. And this may appear if we consider what our Saviour says in St. Matthew's gospel; for there He says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy: Blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall see God: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven: and blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth."

Not that the meek shall not also obtain mercy and see God and be comforted, and at last come to the kingdom of Heaven; but in the meantime he and he only possesses the earth as he goes towards that kingdom of Heaven, by being humble and cheerful and content with what his good God has allotted him. He has no turbulent repining vexatious thoughts that he deserves better, nor is vexed when he sees others possessed of more honor or more riches than his wise God has allotted for his share; but he possesses what he has with a meek and contented quietness, such a quietness as makes his very dreams pleasing both to God and himself.

Isaac Walton.

Pitch thy behavior low, thy projects high ;
So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be ;
Sink not in spirit ; who aimeth at the sky
Shoots higher much than he that means a tree.
A grain of glory mixt with humbleness
Cures both a fever and lethargicness.

Herbert.

“**God** hath appointed one remedy for all the evils in the world, and that is a contented spirit ; for this alone makes a man pass through fire and not be scorched ; through seas and not be drowned ; through hunger and nakedness and want nothing.”

“God is the master of the scenes ; we must not choose which part we shall act ; it concerns us only to be careful that we do it well, always saying, ‘If this please God, let it be as it is ;’ and we who pray that God’s will may be done on earth as it is in heaven, must remember that the angels do whatsoever is commanded them, and go wherever they are sent, and refuse no circumstances ; and if their employment be crossed by a higher degree, they sit down in peace and rejoice in the event ; and when the angel of Judea could not prevail in behalf of the people committed to his charge, because the

angel of Persia opposed it, he only told the story at the command of God, and was as content, and worshipped with as great an ecstasy in his proportion, as the prevailing spirit. Do thou so likewise: keep the station where God hath placed you, and you shall never long for things without, but sit at home feasting upon the Divine Providence and thy own reason, by which we are taught that it is necessary and reasonable to submit to God."

"Enjoy the blessings of this day, if God sends them, and the evils of it bear patiently and sweetly, for this day is only ours; we are dead to yesterday, and we are not yet born to the morrow. He, therefore, that enjoys the present if it is good, enjoys as much as is possible; and if only that day's trouble leans upon him, it is singular and finite. 'Sufficient to the day,' said Christ, 'is the evil thereof'—sufficient but not intolerable. But if we look abroad and bring into one day's thoughts the evil of many, certain and uncertain, what will be, and what will never be, our load will be as intolerable as it is unreasonable."

"Let us often frame to ourselves and represent to our considerations, the images of those blessings we have, just as we usually understand them when we want them. Consider how desirable

health is to a sick man, or liberty to a prisoner, and if but a fit of toothache seize us with violence, all those troubles which in our health afflicted us disband immediately and seem inconsiderable. He that is in his health is troubled that he is in debt, and spends sleepless nights or refuses meat because of his infelicity, let him fall into a fit of the stone or a high fever, he despises the arrest of all his first troubles, and is as a man unconcerned. Remember, then, that God hath given thee a blessing, the want of which is infinitely more trouble than thy present debt, or poverty, or loss, and therefore is now more to be valued in the possession, and ought to outweigh thy trouble. The very privative blessings, the blessings of immunity, safeguard, liberty, and integrity, which we commonly enjoy, deserve the thanksgiving of a whole life. Thou art quit from a thousand calamities, every one of which, if it were upon thee, would make thee insensible of thy present sorrow, and therefore let thy joy (which should be as great for thy freedom from them, as is thy sadness when thou feelest any of them) do the same cure upon thy discontent.

“The greatest evils are from within us ; and from ourselves also we must look for our greatest good ; for God is the fountain of it, but reaches it to us by our own hands ; and when all things

look sadly around about us, then only shall we find how excellent a fortune it is to have God to be our friend ; and of all friendships, that only is created to support us in our needs."

"Be content to bear thy calamity, because thou art sure, in a little time, it will set down gentle and easy ; for to a mortal man no evil is immortal, and here let the worst thing happen that can, it will end in death, and we commonly think that to be near enough."

Bishop Taylor.

Second Thursday.

Simplicity.

Blest be Thy love, dear Lord,
That taught us this sweet way,
Only to love Thee for Thyself,
And for that love obey.

O Thou, our soul's chief hope !
We to thy mercy fly ;
Where'er we are, Thou canst protect,
Whate'er we need, supply.

Whether we sleep or wake,
To Thee we both resign ;
By night we see, as well as day,
If Thy light on us shine.

Whether we live or die,
Both we submit to Thee ;
In death we live, as well as life,
If Thine in death we be.

John Austin.



TELL you in truth, as it is written in the Book of Kings, God is neither in the great and strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in those fires of your excitement and disquietude, but in that sweet and tranquil breathing of a gentle and almost imperceptible air. Allow yourself to be governed by God : think not so much of yourself.

If you wish me to command you, I will do so willingly ; and I will command you in the first place, that, having a general and universal resolution of serving God in the best way that you are able, you do not amuse yourself with examining and subtly sifting out what is the best way of doing so. You know that God wills in general that we should serve Him by loving Him above all things, and our neighbor as ourselves ; in particular, He wills you to keep a rule,—that is enough ; you must do so in good faith, without refining and subtlety. Excitement and agitation of mind is of no use here. Desire indeed is good, but let it be without agitation ; it

is that excitement which I expressly forbid you, as it is the mother-imperfection of all imperfections.

. Do not then examine so carefully whether you are in perfection or not: here are two reasons why you should not. One is, that it is to no purpose our examining ourselves in this way; since, were we the most perfect souls in the world, we ought never to know or be aware of it; but to esteem ourselves always as imperfect: our examen, then, ought never to be directed towards knowing whether we are imperfect, for of that we ought never to doubt. From thence it follows that we ought not to be surprised at finding ourselves imperfect, since we ought never to see ourselves otherwise in this life, nor to be saddened on that account, for there is no remedy for it. I grant you most fully that we ought to humiliate ourselves because of it; for thereby we shall repair our defects, and sweetly amend ourselves. Such is the exercise for which our imperfections are left to us, who are not excusable if we do not seek to amend them, or inexcusable if we fail of amending them completely; for it is not with imperfections as it is with sins.

The other reason is, that this examen, when it is made with anxiety and perplexity, is only

a loss of time ; and those who make it are like musicians who make themselves hoarse with practising a motett ; for the mind wearies itself with an examen so great and so continual, and when the time of execution arrives, it can do no more. This is my first commandment.

The other commandment, which is a consequence from the first one : *If thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be lightsome*, says the Saviour. Simplify your judgment ; do not make so many reflections and replies, but go on simply with confidence ; for you there is nothing else in the world but God and yourself. You have nothing to do with aught else, except so far as God commands it, and in the way in which He commands it to you.

I pray of you, do not look so much hither and thither ; keep your eyes fixed on God and yourself. You will never see God without goodness, or yourself without misery ; and you will see His goodness propitious to your misery. Therefore, do not look at anything but this ; I mean with a fixed and settled gaze ; and look at all the rest with a transient glance.

In the same way avoid minutely examining what other people do, or what will become of them, but look on them with an eye simple, good, sweet, and affectionate. Do not require

in them more perfection than in yourself, and do not be astonished at the diversity of imperfections ; for imperfection is not greater imperfection merely because it is unusual. Behave like the bees—suck the honey from all flowers and herbs.

My third commandment is, that you should behave as little children do. So long as they feel that their mother is holding them by the leading strings, they go on boldly, and run all about, and are not startled at the little falls which the feebleness of their limbs occasions. Thus, whilst you perceive that God is holding you by the good will and resolution which He has given you of serving Him, go on boldly, and do not be startled at the little shocks you will meet with ; and you must not be troubled at them, provided that at certain intervals you cast yourself into His arms and kiss Him with the kiss of charity.

Go on joyously, and with open heart, as much as you can ; and if you do not always go on joyously, at least go on alway courageously and confidently.

St. Francis de Sales.

Second Friday.

Anger.

Anger's a hurricane inbred ;
Meekness a calm in heart and head ;
Revenge, of war runs all the ills ;
Forgiveness, sweets of peace instils.

Rebellion an whole realm annoys ;
Subjection best secures our joys ;
Self-love insatiate still remains ;
God's love full satisfaction gains.

The wicked, like the troubled sea,
Are ne'er from storms of conscience free ;
They outrage God's all-seeing eye,
Till they the devil's martyrs die.

Heaven is of souls the native sphere,
O heaven-born soul, live stranger here !

Bishop Ken,



F thou must needs rule, be Zeno's king, and enjoy that empire which every man gives himself. He who is thus his own monarch contentedly sways the sceptre of himself, nor envying the glory of crowned heads and elohim of the earth. Could the world unite in the practice of that despised train of virtues which the divine ethics of our Saviour hath so inculcated upon us, the furious face of things must disappear ; Eden would be yet to be found, and the angels might look down, not with pity, but joy upon us.

Sir Thomas Browne.

The Scriptures exhorteth us "to possess our souls in patience ;" whosoever is out of patience is out of possession of his soul.

Bacon.

He is not truly patient who will only suffer so much as he thinks good, and from whom he pleases. But the truly patient man minds not by whom he is exercised, whether by his superior, by

one of his equals, or by an inferior ; whether by a good and holy man, or by one that is perverse and unworthy.

Thomas à Kempis.

In every act of sin there are two distinct steps. There is the rising of a desire which is natural, and being natural is not wrong ; there is the indulgence of that desire in forbidden circumstances, and that is sin. Let injury, for example, be inflicted, and resentment will arise. It must arise spontaneously. It is as impossible for injustice to be done and resentment not to follow, as it is for the flesh not to quiver on the application of intense torture. Resentment is but the sense of injustice, made more vivid by its being brought home to ourselves ; resentment is beyond our control, so far. There is no sin in this ; but let resentment rest there ; let it pass into, not justice, but revenge ;—let it smoulder in vindictive feeling till it becomes retaliation,—and then a natural feeling has grown into a transgression. You have the distinction between these two things clearly marked in Scripture. “Be ye angry”—here is the allowance for the human ; “and sin not”—here is the point where resentment passes into retaliation.

Robertson.

Anger is not always a defect, nor an inordinateness in man ; "*Be angry, and sin not.*" Anger is not utterly to be rooted out of our ground and cast away, but transplanted ; a gardener does well to grub up thorns in his garden—there they would hinder good herbs from growing ; but he does well to plant those thorns in his hedges—there they keep bad neighbors from entering. In many cases, where there is no anger, there is not much zeal.

Donne.

Second Saturday.

<i>The Joys of Heaven.</i>

What is the Heaven we idly dream ?
The self-deceiver's dreary theme,
A cloudless sun that softly shines,
Bright maidens and unfailing vines,
The warrior's pride, the hunter's mirth,
Poor fragments all of this low earth ;
Such as in sleep would hardly soothe
A soul that once had tasted of immortal truth.

What is the Heaven our God bestows ?
No prophet yet, no angel knows ;
Was never yet created eye
Could see across eternity ;
Not seraph's wing for ever soaring
Can pass the flight of souls adoring,
That nearer still and nearer grow
To the unapproached Lord, once made for them so low.

Unseen, unfelt their earthly growth,
 And self-accused of sin and sloth,
 They live and die ; their names decay,
 Their fragrance passes quite away ;
 Like violets in the freezing blast,
 No vernal steam around they cast ;
 But they shall flourish from the tomb,
 The breath of God shall wake them into odorous bloom.

Then on the incarnate Saviour's breast,
 The fount of sweetness, they shall rest ;
 Their spirits every hour imbued
 More deeply with His precious blood ;
 But peace—still voice and closed eye,
 Suit best with hearts beyond the sky ;
 Hearts training in their low abode,
 Daily to lose themselves in hope to find their God.
Christian Year.



HE knowledge of God and His Christ,
 a delightful complacency in that
 mutual love, an everlasting rejoicing
 in the enjoyment of our God,
 with a perpetual singing of His
 high praises—this is a heaven for a saint. Then
 we shall live in our own element. We are now
 as a fish in a vessel of water—only so much as
 will keep them alive ; but what is that to the
 ocean ? We have a little air let in to afford us
 breathing ; but what is that to the sweet and
 fresh gales upon Mount Zion ? We have a beam

of the sun to lighten our darkness, and a warm ray to keep us from freezing ; but there we shall live in its light, and be revived by its heat.

Baxter.

When the infant wakes into the light of this world, every organ presently assumes its destined functions ; the heaving bosom confesses the fitness of the material it inhales to support the new style of existence ; and the senses admit the first impressions of the external world, with a sort of anticipated familiarity ; and though utterly untaught in the scenes upon which it has suddenly entered, and inexperienced in the orders of the place where it must, ere long, act its part, yet it is truly meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of life. And thus, too, a real meetness for his birth into the future life may belong to the Christian, though he be utterly ignorant of its circumstances and conditions. But the functions of that new life have been long in a hidden play of preparation for full activity. He has waited in the coil of mortality only for the moment when he should inspire the ether of the upper world, and behold the light of eternal day, and hear the voice of new companions, and taste of the immortal fruit, and drink of the river of

life ; and then after, perhaps, a short season of nursing in the arms of the elder members of the family above, he will take his place in the service and orders of the heavenly house, nor ever have room to regret the ignorance of his mortal state. There is a preparation for that higher world, and an adaptation to it immediately after death.

Isaac Taylor.

Second Sunday.

The Great Enemy.

O, that I could a sin once see !
We paint the devil foul, yet he
Hath some good in him, all agree.
Sin is flat opposite to the Almighty, seeing
It wants the good of virtue, and of being.

But God more care of us hath had :
If apparitions make us sad,
By sight of sin we should grow mad ;
Yet, as in sleep we see foul death, and live,
So devils are our sins in prospective.

Herbert.



O sooner had the voice of God pronounced Jesus to be the well-beloved Son of God, but the devil thought it to be of great concernment to tempt Him, with all his malice and his art ; and that is the condition of

all those whom God's grace hath separated from the common expectations and societies of the world. And, therefore, the son of Sirach gave good advice : " My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy heart for temptation." The Holy Jesus, having been assaulted by the devil and felt his malice by the experiments of humanity, is become so merciful a High Priest, and so sensible of our sufferings and dangers, by the apprehensions of compassions, that He hath put a hook into the nostrils of Leviathan ; and although the relics of seven nations be in our borders and the fringes of our country, yet we live as safe as did the Israelites, upon whom sometimes an inroad and an invasion was made, and sometimes they had rest for forty years ; and when the storm came, some remedy was found out by His grace, by whose permission the tempest was stirred up. And we find many persons who, in seven years, meet not with a violent temptation to a crime, but their battles are against impediments, and retardations of improvement.

For God impedes the devil's rage, and infatuates his counsels ; He diverts his malice, and defeats his purposes ; or suffers him to walk in solitary places, and yet fetters him that he cannot disturb the peace of a child ; He hath given him mighty

power, and yet a young maiden that resists him shall make him flee away ; He gave him power over the winds, and made him prince of the air, and yet the breath of a holy prayer can drive him as far as the utmost sea ; and it is by the grace and mercy of God, put into the power of every Christian, to do that which God, through Jesus Christ, will accept to Salvation ; and neither man nor devils shall hinder it, unless we list ourselves.

Bishop Taylor.

St. Hierom observes well, that the devil, intending mischief to our blessed Saviour, invited Him "to cast Himself down." He may persuade us to a fall, but cannot precipitate us without our own act. And it is an infinite mercy in God, that the devil, who is of malice infinite, is of so restrained and limited a power that he can do us no ghostly disadvantage, but by persuading us to do it ourselves. For, let the temptation be never so strong, every Christian man has assistances sufficient to support him, so as that, without his own yielding, no temptation is stronger than that grace which God offers him ; for, if it were, it were not so much as a sin of infirmity : it were no sin at all.

Bishop Taylor.

It is the devil's part to suggest, ours not to consent ; as oft as we resist him, so often we overcome him ; as often as we overcome him, so often we bring joy to the angels and glory to God, who opposeth us that we may contend, and assisteth us that we may conquer.

St. Bernard.

It is a noble thing, at once to participate in the frailty of man and the security of a god.

Seneca.

Picture to thyself a deep dark valley in which are contained lamentations, and mourning, and woe. Through that runs a narrow bridge, barely a foot in width. Imagine further, a wayfarer passing along this perilous route, blindfolded, that he cannot choose his steps ; with hands bound that he may not use his staff. Think you such an one will laugh and joke as he goes on his way ? Will he not rather tremble and shiver between fear and terror ? Behold further, monstrous birds of prey swarming around him, and endeavoring eagerly to drag him into the abyss below ; and even, as he advances step by step, the single

plank behind him is immediately removed. Hear now what this similitude has to say. That deep dark valley typifies Hell. All that is good finds there no resting-place ; all that is evil, painful, and terrible, haunts its recesses. The perilous bridge is man's path through life ; the planks removed behind the traveller's step are the opportunities for ever past which each day offers ; the rapid removal forces him ceaselessly onward in his fearful course. The swarm of birds is the host of the evil spirits. We are the wanderers blinded by folly, and bound as with a chain by our incapacity for any good. Reflect now, whether or not in such danger, we need to cry for help to One that is mighty to save.

Anselm.

The Devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Whether we sleep or wake, eat or drink, do what we will, day and night he lurks around us ; overflowing with craft and subtilty, directing his arrows against us, now openly, now from his hiding-place. Countless stumbling-stones has he prepared for our feet, and filled our path with snares of all kinds ; he has placed snares in riches as in pov-

erty, snares in words as in works. And yet mankind joke and make merry, as if they were already in safety and security! Our relentless enemy watches, without sleeping or resting—men sleep without watching or praying.

Soliloquia.

Second Monday.

Use of Time.

Meeting with Time, Slack thing, said I,
Thy scythe is dull ; whet it for shame.
No marvel, sir, he did reply,
If it at length deserve some blame ;
But where one man would have me grind it,
Twenty for one too sharp do find it.

Perhaps some such of old did pass,
Who above all things loved this life ;
To whom thy scythe a hatchet was,
Which now is but a pruning knife.
Christ's coming hath made man thy debtor,
Since by thy cutting he grows better.

And in His blessing thou art blest ;
For, where thou only wert before
An executioner at best,
Thou art a gardener now, and more ;

An usher to convey our souls
Beyond the utmost stars and poles.

Herbert.



THE flight of our human hours, not really more rapid at any one moment than another, yet oftentimes to our feelings seems more rapid, and this flight startles us like guilty things with a more affecting *sense* of its rapidity, when a distant church clock strikes in the night time, or when upon some solemn summer evening, the sun's disk, after settling for a minute with farewell horizontal rays, suddenly drops out of sight. The record of our loss in such a case seems to us the first intimation of its possibility, as if we could not be made sensible that the hours were perishable until it is announced to us that already they have perished. We feel a perplexity of distress when that which seems to us the cruelest of injuries, a robbery committed upon our dearest possession by the conspiracy of the world outside, seems also as in fact a robbery sanctioned by our own collusion. The world, and the customs of the world, never cease to levy taxes upon our time ; that is true, and so far the blame is not ours, but the particular *degree* in which we suffer by this robbery depends much upon the

weakness with which we ourselves become parties to the wrong, or the energy with which we resist it. Resisting or not, however, we are doomed to suffer a bitter pang as often as the irrecoverable flight of our time is brough home with keenness to our hearts. The spectacle of a lady floating over the sea in a boat, and waking suddenly from sleep to find her magnificent rope of pearl necklace by some accident detached at one end from its fastenings, the loose string hanging down into the water, and pearl after pearl slipping off forever into the abyss, brings before us the sadness of the case. That particular pearl which at the very moment is rolling off into unsearchable deeps, carries its own separate reproach to the lady's heart. But it is more deeply reproachful as the representative of so many others, uncounted pearls, that have already been swallowed up irrecoverably, while she was yet sleeping, and of many beside that must follow, before any remedy can be applied to what we may call this jewelley hæmorrhage. A constant hæmorrhage of the same kind is wasting our jewelley hours. A day has perished from our brief calendar of days: and that we could endure; but this day is no more than the reiteration of many other days—days counted by thousands, that have perished to

the same extent and by the same unhappy means, viz. : the evil usages of the world made effectual and ratified by our own *lâcheté*. Bitter is the upbraiding which we seem to hear from a secret monitor—"My friend, you make very free with your days : pray, how many do you expect to have ? What is your rental, as regards the total harvest of days which this life is likely to yield ?" Let us consider. Three-score years and ten produce a total sum of 25,550 days ; to say nothing of some seventeen or eighteen more that will be payable to you as a bonus on account of leap years. Now out of this total, one-third must be deducted at a blow for a single item, viz., sleep. Next on account of illness, of recreation, and the serious occupations spread over the surface of life, it will be little enough to deduct another third. Recollect also that twenty years will have gone from the earlier end of your life, (viz. about seven thousand days) before you can have attained any skill or system, or any definite purpose in the distribution of your time. Lastly, for that single item which amongst the Roman armies was indicated by the technical phrase, '*Corpus curare*,' tendance on the animal necessities, viz., eating, drinking, washing, bathing and exercise, deduct the smallest allowance consistent with propriety,

and upon summing up all these appropriations, you will not find so much as four thousand days left disposable for direct intellectual culture. Four thousand, or forty hundreds, will be a hundred forties ; that is, according to the lax Hebrew method of indicating six weeks by the phrase of forty days, you will have a hundred bills or drafts on Father Time, value six weeks each, as the whole period available for intellectual labor. A solid block of about eleven and a half continuous years is all that a long life will furnish for the development of what is most august in man's nature. After that the night comes when no man can work ; brain and arm will be alike unserviceable ; or, if the life should be unusually extended, the vital powers will be drooping as regards all motions in advance.

De Quincey.

Be wise, cut off long cares,
From thy contracted span ;
E'en whilst we speak, the envious time,
Doth make swift haste away ;
Then seize the present, use thy prime,
Nor trust another day.

Creech.

What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed?—a beast, no more!
Sure He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and God-like reason
To rust in us unused!

Second Tuesday.

Almsgiving.

Christ before thy door is waiting :
Rouse thee, slave of earthly gold,
Lo, He comes, thy pomp abating,
Hungry, thirsty, homeless, cold :—
Hungry, by whom saints are fed
With the Eternal Living Bread ;
Thirsty, from whose pierced side
Healing waters spring and glide ;
Cold and bare He comes, who never
May put off his robe of light ;
Homeless, who must dwell for ever
In the Father's bosom bright.

In kind ambush always lying,
He besets thy bed and path ;
Fain would see thee hourly buying
Prayers against the time of wrath,

Prayers of thankful mourners here,
Prayers that in Love's might appear
With the offerings of the Blest
At the shrine of perfect rest.
See, His undecaying treasure
Lies like dew upon the grass,
To be won and stored at pleasure ;—
But its hour will quickly pass.

Christ before His altar standing,
Priest of Priests, in His own Day,
Calls on thee, some fruit demanding
Of the week's heaven-guarded way.
See His arm stretch'd out to bless ;
Whoso nearest to Him press,
Open-handed, eagle-eyed,
They may best that arm abide
When, the last dread lightnings wielding,
He shall lift it, and decree :
“Go, ye churls of soul unyielding,
Where nor gift nor prayer shall be.”

Bring thine all, thy choicest treasure,
Heap it high and hide it deep ;
Thou shalt win o'erflowing measure,
Thou shalt climb where skies are steep.
For as Heaven's true only light
Quickens all those forms so bright,
So where bounty never faints,
There the Lord is with His saints,
Mercy's sweet contagion spreading
Far and wide from heart to heart,

From his wounds atonement shedding
On the blessed widow's part.

Keble.



WHATSOEVER thou givest beside
thyself, is of no value in My sight,
for I seek not thy gifts, but thee.
As it would not suffice thee to
have all things whatsoever beside
Me, so neither can it please Me, whatsoever
thou givest, if thou offer not thyself.

Imitation of Christ.

It is a happiness to be born and framed into virtue, and to grow up from the seeds of nature, rather than the inoculation and forced grass of education : yet if we are directed only by our particular natures, and regulate our inclinations by no higher rule than that of our reasons, we are but moralists ; divinity will still call us heathens. Therefore this great work of charity must have other motives, ends, and impulsions. I give no alms to satisfy the hunger of my brother, but to fulfil and accomplish the will and command of my God ; I draw not my purse for his sake that demands it, but His that enjoined it ; I relieve no man upon the rhetoric of his miseries, nor to content mine own commiserating

disposition ; for this is still but moral charity, and an act that oweth more to passion than reason. He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion and bowels of pity, doth not this so much for his sake as for his own ; for by compassion we make others' misery our own, and so by relieving them, we relieve ourselves also. It is as erroneous a conceit to redress other men's misfortunes upon the common considerations of merciful natures, that it may be one day our own case ; for this is a sinister and polite kind of charity, whereby we seem to bespeak the pities of men in the like occasions.

Sir Thomas Browne.

“Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor ; and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore fourfold.” One particular and eminent fruit of true repentance is the making satisfaction and restitution to those whom we have injured. To God, indeed, we can never make compensation for the injuries we have done to Him by our sins ; all that we can do, is, to confess our sins to Him, to make acknowledgement of our miscarriages, to be heartily troubled for what we have done, and not to do the like again. But for injuries done to men

we may, in many cases, make reparation and satisfaction. And this, as it is one of the best signs, and proofs of a true repentance, so is it one of the most proper and genuine effects of it; for this is, as much as in us lies, to undo what we have done and to unsin our sins.

Archbishop Tillotson.

Third Wednesday.

Almsgiving.

Heaven rains on every heart,
But there its showers divide,
The drops of mercy choosing as they part,
The dark or glowing side.

One kindly deed may turn
The fountain of thy soul
To love's sweet day-star, that shall o'er thee burn
Long as its currents roll !

The pleasures thou hast planned,
Where shall their memory be,
When the white angel with the freezing hand,
Shall sit and watch by thee ?

Living, thou dost not live,
If mercy's spring run dry ;
What Heaven has lent thee wilt thou freely give,
Dying, thou shalt not die !

He promised even so !
To thee His lips repeat—
Behold, the tears that soothed thy sister's woe
Have washed thy Master's feet.

Oliver Wendell Holmes.



GIVE, looking for nothing again ; that is, without consideration of future advantages ; give to children, to old men, to the unthankful, and the dying, and to those whom you shall never see again ; for else your alms or courtesy is not charity but traffic and merchandize ; and be sure that you omit not to relieve the needs of your enemy and the injurious ; for so, possibly, you may win time to yourself ; but do you intend the winning him to God. Trust not your alms to intermedial, uncertain, and under-dispensers ; by which rule is not only intended the securing your alms in the right channel ; but the humility of your person, and that which the apostle calls "the labor of love." And if you converse in hospitals and almshouses, and minister with your own hand, what your heart hath first decreed, you will find your heart endeared and made familiar with the needs and with the persons of the poor, those excellent images of Christ.

If thou hast no money, yet thou must have mercy, and art bound to pity the poor, and pray

for them, and throw thy holy desires and devotions into the treasury ; and if thou dost what thou art able, be it little or great, corporal or spiritual, the charity of alms or the charity of prayers, a cup of wine or a cup of water, if it be but love to the brethren, or a desire for all or any of Christ's poor, it shall be accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not. For love is all this and all the other commandments ; and it will express itself where it can, and where it cannot yet it is love still, and it is also sorrow, that it cannot.

Bishop Taylor.

That is no true alms which the hand can hold ;
He gives nothing but worthless gold
Who gives from a sense of duty :
But he who gives a slender mite,
And gives to that which is out of sight,
That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty
Which runs through all and doth all unite,—
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,
The heart outstretches its eager palms,
For a god goes with it and makes it store
To the soul that was starving in darkness before.
The Holy Supper is kept indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need,—
Not that which we give, but what we share,—
For the gift without the giver is bare ;
Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me.

James Russell Lowell

Third Thursday.

Weariness in Worship.

But Faith is cold, and wilful men are strong,
And the blithe world, with bells and harness proud,
Ride tinkling by, so musical and loud,
It drowns the Eternal Word, the Angelic Song :
And one by one the weary listless throng
Steals out of church, and leaves the choir unseen
Of winged guards to weep, where prayer had been,
That souls immortal find that hour too long.
Most fatal token of a falling age !
Wit ever busy, learning ever new,
Unsleeping Fancy, Eloquence untired ;—
Prayer only dull ! The Saints' and Martyrs' page

A tedious scroll ; the scorned and faithful few
Left to bewail such beauty undesired.

Lyra Apostolica.



TAKE good care not to give way to any sort of mistrust ; for that heavenly goodness does not allow you to fall in this way in order to abandon you, but to humiliate you, and to make you cling the more firmly to the hand of His mercy.

You do exactly as I think you ought, in continuing your exercises in the midst of the dryness and interior languors which have returned to you ; for, since we will not serve God except for the love of Him, and since the service which we render Him in the midst of the affliction of dryness is more pleasing to Him than that which we perform in the midst of sweetness, we ought also on our side to acquiesce in it more, at least with our higher will ; and, although, according to our taste and self-love, sweetnesses are more pleasant to us, nevertheless drynesses remain according to God's taste and to His love, and are more profitable, as dry food is better for the dropsical than watery food, although they always are fondest of the latter. Your fits of coldness ought in no wise to astonish you, provided that you have a real desire of warmth, and

that you do not cease on account of cold from continuing your exercises. Alas! tell me, was not the sweet Jesus born in the heart of cold? and wherefore shall He not also remain in the cold of the heart? I understand this cold of which, as I think, you speak to me, which does not consist in any relaxation of our good resolutions, but simply in a certain lassitude and heaviness of spirit, which makes us walk with difficulty in the path in which we have placed ourselves, and from which we are resolved never to stray until we are safe in port.

However, live entirely unto God; and for the love which He has borne towards you, support yourself in all your miseries. To be a good servant of God is not to be always in consolation, always in sweetness, always without aversion or repugnance to good; for, at this rate, neither St. Paula, nor St. Angela, nor St. Catherine of Sienna, served God well. To be a servant of God is to be charitable towards your neighbor; to have in the highest part of your soul an inviolable resolution to follow the will of God; to have a most humble humility and simplicity to trust yourself with God, and to rise again as often as you fall; to bear with yourself in your abjections, and tranquilly to endure the imperfections of others.

St. Francis de Sales.

“Bless’*d* Jesu, Thou, on Heaven intent,
Whole nights hast in devotion spent ;
But I, frail creature, soon am tired,
And all my zeal is soon expired.

My soul, how can’st thou weary grow
Of antedating bliss below,
In sacred hymns and heavenly love,
Which will eternal be above ?

Shine on me, Lord, new life impart !
Fresh ardors kindle in my heart !
One ray of Thy all-quicken*g* light
Dispels the sloth and clouds of night.

Lord, lest the tempter me surprise,
Watch over Thine own sacrifice !
All loose, all idle thoughts cast out,
And make my very dreams devout.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow ;
Praise Him all creatures here below ;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host ;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost !

Bishop Ken.



OW, O man, cease for a little from
thy work, withdraw thyself for a
while from thy stormy thoughts,
forget thy weary and burdensome
struggling, give thyself for a time
to God, and rest calmly in Him. Leave all
around thee where God is not, and where thou..

wilt find no help from Him ; go into the inner chamber of thine heart, and shut the door behind thee. Say then with thy whole heart, "I seek Thy face, O Lord ; teach Thou me where and how I should seek Thee, and where and how I shall find Thee."

Anselm.

If God hath given to mortals nothing without toil (as the poet saith), if, according to the Apostle, no man "is crowned, except he strive lawfully ;" then must thou also weary thyself, wilt thou gaze upon the glory of God. How long wilt thou be satisfied with poverty in this vale of tears, with the dirt and dross of earth ? Arise hastily, run in thy course as the swift, climb vigorously the mountain of the Lord. How long shall thy soul be benumbed with frost and cold ? How long deprived of the flame of devotion ? Cease not to read, to meditate, to pray ; ply well the bellows till a spark of devotion arise. Verily, in the beginning, the black smoke and clouds of temptation threaten to suffocate it, thine eyes smart, thy brow wrinkles ; yet fear not, only continue to blow ; soon the flame shall break forth bright and clear, and at last God will grant thee pure, untroubled light,

free from smoke as a glowing coal. If the Lord lend thee grace, if thou be raised to such an elevation, seek to protect the flame of devotion under the ashes of humility ; no less from the whirlwind of pride than from the snows of indolent carelessness. Woe be to them who trifle away the day of grace !

Gerson.

Down, slothful heart ! how darest thou say,
“ Call not so oft to pray ? ”
Behold the Lord’s own bounteous showers
Keep their appointed hours.
The forenoon saw the Spirit first,
On orphan’d saints in glory burst ;
At noontide hour, Saint Peter saw
The sheet let down, heavenward all earth to draw ;
At eventide, when good Cornelius kneeled
Upon his fasting-day, an angel shone revealed.

Untired is He in mercy’s task,
Then tire not thou to ask.
He says not, “ Yesterday I gave ;
Wilt thou for ever crave ? ”
He every moment waits to give,
Watch thou unwearied to receive.
Thine hours of prayer, upon the cross
To him were hours of woe and shame and loss ;
Scourging at morn ; at noon, pierced hands and feet,
At eve, fierce pains of death for thee He counted sweet.

The blue sky o'er the green earth bends,
All night the dew descends ;
The green earth to the blue heaven's ray,
Its bosom spreads all day ;
Earth answers heaven—the holy race
Should answer his unfailing grace.
Then smile, low world, in spite or scorn,
We to our God will kneel, ere prime of morn ;
The third, the sixth, the ninth—each passion hour—
We with high praise will keep, as He with gifts of power.

Lyra Innocentium.

Third Friday.

Focus to Christ.

Think well how Jesus trusts Himself
Unto our childish love,
As though by His free ways with us
Our earnestness to prove.

God gives Himself as Mary's Babe
To sinners' trembling arms,
And veils His everlasting light
In childhood's feeble charms.

His sacred name a common word
On earth He loves to hear ;
There is no majesty in Him
Which love may not come near.

The light of love is round His feet,
His paths are never dim ;
And He comes nigh to us when we
Dare not come nigh to Him.

Let us be simple with Him then,
Not backward, stiff, and cold,
As though our Bethlehem could be
What Sina was of old.

His love of us may teach us how
To love Him in return ;
Love cannot help but grow more free
The more its transports burn.

Faber.



THE great effect of the Incarnation was to render human love for the Most High a possible thing.

The character of the Blessed Founder of our faith became an abstract of morality to determine the judgment, while at the same time it remained personal and liable to love. The written word and established church prevented a degeneration into ungoverned mysticism ; but the predominant principle of vital religion always remained that of self-sacrifice to the Saviour. Not only the higher divisions of moral duties, but the simple primary impulses of benevolence, were subordinated to this new absorbing passion. The world was loved "in Christ alone." The brethren were members of his mystical body. All the other bonds that had fastened down the spirit of the universe to our narrow round of earth were as

nothing in comparison to this golden chain of suffering and self-sacrifice which at once riveted the heart of man to one who, like himself, was acquainted with grief. Pain is the deepest thing we have in our nature ; and union through pain has always seemed more real and more holy than any other.

Arthur Henry Hallam.

God has commanded us to be perfect in love ; not because He was unaware that such a command far exceeded our abilities, but because He desired thereby to remind us of our weakness, and to keep before us the prize of righteousness after which we must strive. In thus demanding from man impossibility, it is not with the view of hurling him into sin, but of compelling him to humility, that "every mouth may be stopped," and all creation subject unto Christ—for "through the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." When, therefore, we hear this command, and are sensible of our inability to fulfil its requirements, our only course is to cry unto heaven ; then will our gracious Father look down in His mercy and supply the needed strength.

Bernard.

His courtiers of the Caliph crave—
“Oh, say how this may be,
That of thy slaves this Ethiop slave
Is best beloved by thee.

“For he is hideous as the night,
Yet when has ever chose
A nightingale for its delight
A hueless, scentless rose!”

The Caliph then—“No features fair
Nor comely mien are his;
Love is the beauty he doth wear,
And love his glory is.

“Once when a camel of my train
There fell in narrow street,
From broken casket rolled amain
Rich pearls before my feet.

‘I nodding to my slaves that I
Would freely give them these,
At once upon the spoil they fly,
The costly boon to seize.

“One only at my side remained,
Beside this Ethiop, none;
He, moveless as the steed he reined,
Beside me sat alone.

“What will thy gain, good fellow, be,
Thus lingering at my side?
‘My king, that I shall faithfully
Have guarded thee,’ he cried.

“True servants’ title he may wear,
He only, who has not
For his lord’s gifts, how rich soe’er,
His lord himself forgot.”

So thou alone dost walk before
Thy God with perfect aim,
From Him desiring nothing more
Beside Himself to claim.

For if thou not to Him aspire,
But to His gifts alone,
Not love, but covetous desire,
Has brought thee to His throne.

While such thy prayer, it climbs above
In vain—the golden key
Of God’s rich treasure-house of love,
Thine own will never be.

Trench.

Third Saturday.

Plans.

In a service which Thy will appoints
There are no bounds for me ;
For my inmost heart is taught the Truth
That makes thy children free ;
And a life of self-renouncing love,
Is a life of liberty.

A. L. Waring.



REGRET having regulated my life upon my own plans, my plans of fidelity and Christian sanctification, and not simply upon the plan which the Saviour unfolds before every one of us. I believe I shall be able to explain myself in a few words, and that every child of God will understand me.

We are prone to make to ourselves a certain ideal of the Christian life, of Christian activity, and of the Christian ministry, and to attach to this ideal certain plans and certain methods, in such a way that we are not contented if we do not attain to the realization of them ; and thus it behooves us to make the best possible plans, and to seek for the best possible method of carrying them out. All this is well ; but beneath it all there is a fault ; it is the *me*, the hidden *me*, which is rooted at the bottom of the heart, and which is seen in all our best and purest works. Whereas that which I would do, would be to take the plan of my life and of my daily conduct, not from my own ideas and sentiments, but from the commandments of God, in His inward witness, in the conduct of His Spirit, and in the external directions which He gives to our lives.

You will understand entirely my meaning in regard to the way in which I would regulate my life, if you will consider the manner in which our Saviour guided His. We do not find in the life of Jesus those plans and methods which have so much occupied many good men, and often have tormented them so much, and taken up time that might have been better spent. But what do we find ? We find a man (I am looking at Him

now as the Son of Man), who proposes to Himself nothing but to accomplish the mission of His Father, and who has no other plan than to enter into the plan of His Father, so that His eyes fixed upon Him, He is only occupied in listening to His voice to follow Him, and in discerning His will to execute it. The good works of Jesus Christ are all given to Him one after the other, placed before Him on His road by the hand of God, and follow each other so easily, spring so naturally one from the other, that they are never confused and entangled, even in the busiest days of His ministry. In one day—for example, such an one as we have described to us in the ninth chapter of St. Matthew, where He calls to the ministry one of His apostles, heals the sick, revives the dead, and on His way delivers a woman from the malady of years, without counting the other benefits which He diffuses on all sides in His route—there is not an instance of embarrassment or hesitation, neither in the manner of doing His works, neither in the time given to each one of them, because Jesus Christ follows simply the plan of God, and God assumes the direction of Him. When there is this perfect accord with the will of God, there is, on God's part, a perfect light to conduct us. Thus is realized a beautiful and deep thought

of the Holy Spirit : " We are created in Christ Jesus for good works, that God has prepared beforehand for us to walk in." Where the good works are presented to us, not by a road that we have to make for ourselves, but by one which God has made for us, and in which we have nothing to do but to walk. It is the highway of God, it is not our own. We have nothing to do but to follow this road, and we are constantly doing the will of God.

If I have been able to make you understand, in these few words, what it is I would have you do, and what I should do myself if life were spared to me, it will be easy to show you what advantages this conformity to the Divine will offers, above the carrying out of any personal plans whatever. It is not, however, my intention to discourage such plans—plans that we should make as perfect as possible. I believe that the infirmity of our nature is the better for this support, provided alway that our personal plans are in continual subjection to the one thought of following only the will of God.

And now, to pause on two or three principal thoughts of the theme : this path of which Christ gives us the example, is first of all a condition of holiness. What is sin, taken in its inmost essence ? It is the pursuit of self, the con-

fidence in self, one's own will, one's own judgment, one's own glory, and all that pertains to one's self personally. Thus the desire to do well, and to do even the will of God, if built on plans and projects formed in ourselves, has inevitably a root of sin somewhere in it; while, on the contrary, the essence of holiness being the union of our will to the Divine will, it is when we have no plan but the plan of God, and no will but the will of God, that we are in a state of true holiness—a holiness that will not only have an outward beauty, but an inward strength, "Holy even as He is holy." The holiness of Christ follows and depends upon the principle that I have just laid down—constant abandonment to the will of God, manifested within by the testimony of His Spirit, without, by the declarations of His word and by the signs of His Providence. Christ is holy because He only wills what God wills, because He seeks not His own glory, but His that sent Him; there lay the power of His holiness. This conformity to the Divine plan is then a condition of true holiness.

It is at the same time a condition of activity. One loses a vast amount of time when one seeks one's own way, even for good. How easily we deceive ourselves, and give ourselves up to

reflections and considerations infinite. And how many men have acknowledged, at the end of their career, that no inconsiderable portion of their lives has been employed in forming plans, that might have been better spent in the work of the passing moment, and for the-interest of others. Let us see what activity the plan of Christ exhibits, from which I have just quoted. In the ninth chapter of St. Matthew and elsewhere, good works are scattered with a bountiful hand, good works upon good works ; there is no limit to the activity founded upon this complete accord with the Divine will ; the action of the man becomes then a Divine action, and the life becomes a Divine life in the bosom of that humanity which then accomplishes something, as by the power of God. We can have no idea what we should be able to do if we were completely lost in this accord with God ; if we sought no will but His, if not a word of our mouths, not a beat of our hearts, not a thought of our minds, not a movement of our souls or bodies, but were turned to Him, obediently, in the spirit of Samuel :

“ Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.”

There are men who have shown what man can do ; a Luther, a Calvin, a St. Paul, a Moses ; these men have shown what a man can do when

he only seeks the will of God. Jesus Christ has done much more, because in Him alone the conformity of His will with the Divine was perfect. It is then a condition of activity, and an activity almost without limit; though there is a limit, because God does not ask of His creatures more than they are able to perform.

Finally, it is a condition of peace. There is no peace for the man who takes himself for his starting-point. There is always room to fear that he is deceiving himself; he is troubled, and often in error, because the human will and human interests are subject to many errors; he has no rest, he excites himself, he torments himself, and inspires with deep compassion those who, seeing the strong desire that he has to glorify God, see at the same time the accumulation of obstacles that he places in his path by his want of simplicity; while, on the other hand, when we look to God alone, we cast all our burden upon Him, and He sustains us.

And more. If my projects emanate from myself, they may be impracticable. Perhaps I would follow some career of which I can not bear the expense; or I would be a painter, and my sight fails me; a surgeon, but my hand lacks steadiness; then is my career spoiled, and I am inconsolable. But there is no possibility of a

spoiled career, if my projects are made according to God's plan for me. For then this very impossibility that I find in doing what I had at first proposed, proves to me that it is not that to which God calls me, and the infirmities even that stop me are so many lights by which God reveals my true work to me. If we act in this spirit (I say it with reverence), our work is more God's affair than ours, His work and not our work ; and the activity, the personal exertion which He always demands of us, consists only in a faithful and unquestioning obedience. In that we shall find deep peace ; God cannot mislead us.

Often we are agitated by the thought that we are not doing enough, or that we are not doing the work that God has given us to do. I remember particularly how much, during the first weeks that followed the final decision of my physicians, I was troubled by the thought that my work was not done. By the grace of God I have been delivered from such thoughts ; I have learned that it is not a question of my work, but of God's ; and I am thankful that by the very sufferings and afflictions that He has sent me, and by the hope of eternal life to follow them, the Good Lord has brought me to the exercise of another ministry, probably more important

than the one which I proposed to myself, and at all events more sure, because coming to me more directly from the hand of God, which constrains me mercifully to walk in this path for His service and glory.

It is then that we can say with the dying Christ: "I have finished the work that Thou hast given me to do." How was He enabled to say that? Because He only sought to do the work of God, and God took Him away as one gathers the ripe fruit, when His mission was accomplished. And for ourselves, also, let us only seek to do the work that the Father has given us to do, and to put ourselves entirely in His hands. And we also, if we are faithful, shall not be taken away till our work is done. To God alone it belongs to decide when the work which He has given us to do is finished. It may be very imperfect, very incomplete to the eyes of men; but still the Saviour will not permit, if we have been true to Him, that our lives pass without leaving a trace upon the earth; He will not take us away till our work is completed in His sight, and till we can say before our Lord, in a spirit of humility:

"I have finished the work Thou hast given me to do."

There is great peace in seeking one's plan

only from God, and in following it to the renunciation of one's own ; and there is no peace elsewhere.

Thus, let us study to seek our plans nowhere but from God, both those who are humbled and recalled, and those who live to grow in grace. Let us study in this spirit to follow Christ in His Gethsemane, and to keep our eyes fixed constantly upon the will of the Father. It will be for us, as it was for Christ, a condition of holiness, a condition of activity, and a condition of perfect peace. It is this peace which I would ask for you. And I should be very happy if I might hope that these few words would incite those who have still before them time, life, strength, to use them so faithfully and so simply, to glorify God after the example of the Saviour, that they may say in their turn : "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do ;" and that they may pass the time of their earthly life in peace, waiting till they shall be called from this world to the Father, by the grace of the Saviour, by the power and virtue of the Holy Spirit !

A. Monod.

Third Sunday.

Doubts.

Leave me not now, while still the shade is creeping
O'er the sad heart that longs to rest in Thee ;
Hear my complaint, and while my soul is weeping,
Breathe Thou the holy dew of sympathy.

Leave me not now, Thou Saviour of compassion,
While yet the busy tempter lurketh near ;
Lord, by Thine anguish and Thy wond'rous passion,
Do I entreat Thee now to linger here.

Jesus, Thou soul of love, Thou heart of feeling,
Let me repose the weary night away
Safe on Thy bosom, all my woes revealing,
Secure from danger, till the dawn of day.

Then leave me not, O Comforter and Father.
Parent of love ! I live but in Thy sight ;

Good Shepherd, to Thy fold the wand'rer gather,
There to adore Thee, morning, noon, and night.



YOU ask me for remedies against the temptations against the faith which are troubling you. You must deal with these temptations exactly as you would with those against purity.

Dispute with them neither much nor little, but do as the children of Israel did with the bones of the paschal lamb, which they never attempted to break, but cast them into the fire. You must never answer nor seem to understand what the enemy says. Let him make as much noise as he pleases at the gate; never once say, Who goes there?

Very true, you will say to me, but he importunes me, and his noise is so loud that those within cannot hear each other speak. Never mind; patience; they must speak by signs; you must prostrate yourself before God, and remain there at His feet; He will understand by this humble guise that you are on His side, and that you wish for His help, though you cannot speak. But, above all, keep yourself fast within; and on no account open the door, either to see who knocks, or to drive away the troublesome applicant. He will at length weary of his noise, and leave you in peace.

Courage, then ; provided he does not enter in, it matters nothing. It is, however, a very good sign that the enemy keeps knocking and storming at the gate ; for it shows that he has not what he wants. If he had, he would not make any more noise, but enter in, and quietly remain there.

St. Francis de Sales.

And shall I sit alone,
Oppressed with grief and fear,
To God my Father make my moan,
And he refuse to hear ?

If He my Father be,
His pity he will show,
From cruel bondage set me free,
And inward peace bestow.

If still He silence keep,
'Tis but my faith to try ;
He knows and feels, whene'er I weep,
And softens every sigh.

Then will I humbly wait,
Nor once indulge despair,
My sins are great, but not so great
As His compassions are.

Benjamin Beddome

Let us try to understand the doubt of Thomas. There are some men whose affections are stronger than their understandings ; they feel more than they think. They are simple, trustful, able to repose implicitly on what is told them,—liable sometimes to verge upon credulity and superstition, but, take them all in all, perhaps the happiest class of minds ; for it is happy to be without misgivings about the love of God and our own eternal rest in Him. “Blessed,” said Christ to Thomas, “are they that have believed.”

There is another class of men whose reflective powers are stronger than their susceptible ; they think out truth—they do not feel it out. Often highly gifted and powerful minds, they cannot rest until they have made all their ground certain ; they do not feel safe as long as there is one possibility of delusion left ; they prove all things. Such a man was Thomas. He has well been called the rationalist among the apostles. Happy such men cannot be. An anxious and inquiring mind dooms its possessor to unrest. But men of generous spirit, manly and affectionate, they may be ; Thomas was. When Christ was bent on going to Jerusalem, to certain death, Thomas said, “Let us go up, too, that we may die with Him.” And men of mighty faith they may become, if they are true to them-

selves and their convictions. Thomas did
When such men do believe, it is a belief with
all the heart and soul for life. When a subject
has been once thoroughly and suspiciously investi-
gated, and settled once for all, the adherence of
the whole reasoning man, if given in at all, is
given frankly and heartily, as Thomas gave—

“My Lord and my God.”

* * * * The honest doubt of Thomas
craves a sign as much as the cold doubt of the
Sadducee. And a sign shall be mercifully
given to the doubt of love which is refused to
the doubt of indifference.

Robertson.

Third Monday.

The Trials of Illness—Despondency.

Why art thou sorrowful, servant of God ?
And what is this dulness that hangs o'er thee now ?
Sing the praises of Jesus, and sing them aloud,
And the song shall dispel the dark cloud from thy brow

For is there a thought in the wide world so sweet,
As that God has so cared for us, bad as we are ;
That He thinks of us, plans for us, stoops to entreat,
And follows us, wander we ever so far ?

Then how can the heart e'er be drooping or sad,
Which God hath once touched with the light of His
grace ?
Can the child have a doubt who but lately hath laid
Himself to repose in his father's embrace ?

And is it not wonderful, servant of God !

That He should have honored us so with His love ;
That the sorrows of life should but shorten the road
Which leads to Himself and the mansion above ?

Oh, then, when the spirit of darkness comes down
With clouds and uncertainties into thy heart,
One look to thy Saviour, one thought of thy crown,
And the tempest is o'er, the shadows depart.

That God hath once whispered a word in thine ear,
Or sent thee from heaven one sorrow for sin,
Is enough for a life both to banish all fear,
And to turn into peace all the troubles within.

The schoolmen can teach thee far less about heaven,
Of the height of God's power, of the depth of His love,
Than the fire in thy heart when thy sin was forgiven,
Or the light which one mercy brings down from above.

Then why dost thou weep so ? for see how time flies,
The time that for loving and praising was given ;
Away with thee, child, and hide thy red eyes
In the lap, the kind lap of thy Father in heaven.

Faber.



HERE are times in every illness,
except, perhaps, those too rapid
for thought to have way ; there
are times in every illness when a
sudden and deep despondency falls
upon the mind, and horror fills the soul. It is

somewhat akin to the utter sinking of heart with which one sees the hour of an operation draw near. It is not the actual amount of pain that is dreaded ; it is the fear of anticipation, almost always greater than the pain to be inflicted. We know it is so, we tell ourselves so ; but it is the approach of the unknown that makes our lips blanch and our heart beat quickly. Something like it, though less in degree, is the panic sometimes felt before some important interview with a stranger or an influential person, or an examination of our case by a physician. We know that the moment is to a certain degree important, and we cannot tell what may be the result, or feel *sure of ourselves*. Whenever we can trace beforehand exactly what we shall have to do, and know we are equal to the emergency, there is no failing of the heart through fear. But who can say this of himself when his frame is exhausted by illness, his nerves unstrung, his limbs powerless ? The merest trifle to which he has then to look forward, assumes an appalling magnitude, and our strength to sustain our part on any occasion appears to be less than nothing. How can we then look forward to a long and trying illness, to the sorrow of surrounding friends, to the pain and terrors of death, with tolerable serenity ?

How can we, when looking back on our past lives, more especially, lift up our eyes to the hope of acceptance with God? We know indeed that He is all-merciful, but have we not been all-guilty? Have we not sinned against mercies and warnings? Have we not had so much loving-kindness shown to us that we are doubly guilty, to be still so far, so cold, so indifferent? We are speaking of those who really are and have long been aware of their privileges, as Christians, and who are striving to live up to them. And we appeal to many such if we have exaggerated the despondency—we might almost say the dismay—that occasionally overtakes them; prayer seems unable to cheer or warm their hearts; praise cannot lift up her voice; confession is cold and lifeless; and reading finds them repeating the well-known words by heart, their glazed eyes scarcely seeing the words, their brain and heart incapable of entering into them. It is not wonderful, that such being their condition, they should feel death itself in their souls, and despair of ever knowing the calm, serene faith and patience they have so often heard described, that they almost expected them as part of their illness—despair even of their hold upon eternal life. Let them remember that we are “always to pray and not to faint.” It is for their

good that they are made to feel their utter need of God, even in the details of life, still more before the great and clouded and uncertain future lying dim before them. But that despondency is no proof of non-acceptance, nor assurance a proof of great sanctity, both divines and saints have informed us—nay, even the words of Christ Himself; for what said He of the publican? Not that we would *approve* a desponding temper; it shows a weak faith and too great self-contemplation, but it does not by any means imply anything so terrible as insecurity; it has been a trial and temptation to the saints of all ages, it was never to be a torment to the lost, except it induce the soul that once believed to make shipwreck of its faith. Indifference, false security, are symptoms of a hardened heart. Despondency is one consequence of the light of life bursting in and showing us the dark and unholy things that cower in our hearts. While we look there, we fear, and justly; but let us look up to the cross, and trusting firmly in Christ's willingness to save all who come to him, let us remember our broken vows, and repent before Him daily, confessing our sins, and by the aid of His Holy Spirit cleanse the hearts that should be meet temples for His dwelling-place.

There is much in natural character, much in

the nature of the disease, to account for despondency in certain invalids. And here we would more especially address those who are struggling with an adverse climate, striving to continue their exertions, though laboring against a current that saps their strength. This, be the climate warm or cold, often produces the most distressing despondency upon every subject; first, doubts of oneself and of the adequacy and success of one's efforts; then, doubts of those around one; then, of the general success of one's affairs temporal; and finally and most distressingly, the doubts and fears we have already described, as to our state before God and final acceptance with Him; doubts to be carefully distinguished from the misgivings of an awakening and long-seared conscience. These latter will not be stilled by a nearer contemplation of the Divine Master—rather roused and quickened; the former will be hushed and tranquillized, the latter must be allowed full way; the former must be checked, lest our looking unto Christ become a morbid and despairing looking unto ourselves, killing to faith, and hope, and even charity. If, however, we cannot quiet our fears, let us consult our clergyman. If indeed we are blessed in our pastor, let us beseech him to visit us frequently in our sickness and sorrow, and teach,

and exhort, and comfort, us ; but in order that his visits should be effectual, we must place confidence in him. A real pastor's visit is looked forward to by an invalid as a great blessing—greater yet when he administers to him the Holy Communion. Thus shall we find strength and courage for all that is to be laid upon us, support against desponding fears, fears of the death-agony, fears of falling from Christ, fears of final condemnation—all the fears of the Christian's heart there find rest and peace. "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

But there are other fears more real and startling—the fears of the really negligent, indifferent, or profane heart, that has loved everything less than self, yet more than God. To such the approach of illness is indeed terrible ; the first touch of real pain or danger sends a living barbed arrow into that foolish heart, thickly veils all its pictures of happiness, and breaks its beloved idols. Ambition was your idol ? Your future is a bed and a grave. Admiration ? You are already removed from the possibility of its approaching you. Pleasure and ease ? You must suffer and know no rest. Fortune ? You cannot buy off fever nor purchase health. It would be some compensation if the sins that worshipped

these idols were destroyed also. But no—pride and vanity, sensuality and greed, die not with loss of natural food, but they prey upon the heart and spirit, and arm sickness with a thousand stings.

You fear, you fear, poor sufferers? God hath laid His hand upon you, and it grieveth you sore. Open your heart to Him; tell Him, as you would tell an earthly friend, all that lies so heavily on your heart—your broken plans, your lost hopes, your preparations for this life unfinished, your preparations for another not yet begun. Fear not to tell Him all, for He will perfectly understand all. He sends you this illness to remind you of certain vows made for you long ago, of a sign signed upon you of love, that has followed you unseen all your days. He sends you these fears also. Fears to send you to your Saviour's Cross, there to confess your long, long career of careless life. Be warned in time—return to Him and He will return unto you. Own your sinful state, and be sure He will raise you from it. He shall still your passing fears, and make you see that with Him, if there is infinite justice, there is infinite mercy, too. Despair of yourself if you will, but do not despair of Him. He is all-perfect in love as in judgment. He will yet teach you to desire His presence, not as the only pos-

sible escape from punishment, but because He is your Lord, your Master, your Father, and your Friend. Amen.

Lady Charlotte Maria Pepys.

Third Tuesday.

The Trials of Illness.—Pain.

Pain's furnace-heat within me quivers,
God's breath upon the fire doth blow,
And all my heart in anguish shivers,
And trembles at the fiery glow ;
And yet I whisper, " As God will ! "
And in His hottest fire hold still.

He comes, and lays my heart, all heated,
On the bare anvil, minded so
Into His own fair shape to beat it
With His great hammer, blow on blow ;
And yet I whisper, " As God will ! "
And at His heaviest blows hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it,
The sparks fly off at every blow ;
He turns it o'er and o'er, and heats it,
And lets it cool, and makes it glow ;

And yet I whisper, "As God will!"
And in His mighty hand hold still.

Why should I murmur? for the sorrow
Thus only longer-lived would be;
Its end may come, and will, to-morrow,
When God has done His work in me;
So I say trusting, "As God will!"
And trusting to the end, hold still.

He kindles for my profit purely
Affliction's glowing, fiery brand;
And all His heaviest blows are surely
Inflicted by a master-hand;
So I say, praying, "As God will!"
And hope in Him, and suffer still.



PAIN, the seal of man's inheritance of woe, claims every son of Adam from his birth till the grave close upon him. Pain is said to be one of the torments of the doomed; it may, perhaps, be mental rather than physical; but it is still pain. Pain exists not in heaven: "There shall be no more pain." Few complaints exist without pain; it is the warning to the living body that decay is there, or, if not decay, injury and disease; it warns us, ere it be too late, to apply a remedy; or, if none be found, to prepare for our admission there where "shall be no more

pain." Pain of the body, like pain of the mind, affects us differently. An excellent divine has said : " Our sensibilities to pain are very various. One thing hurts one person, and another another ; that which is agony to you, your neighbor scarcely feels. This is true of the roughnesses of life, of the calumnies of life, of the disappointments of life." Only let us all be sure that we suffer, in whatever degree it be, with Christ.

Pain confuses, dazzles the mental sight, or oppresses it with a dim weight of darkness. Pain, acute pain, seems to concentrate life into a moment. Can I live through such another pang ? is the question that occurs to one. It takes one's breath, it fixes eye and muscle ; it is like a giant iron hand, that grasps the weak part, and paralyses the whole.

Pain, throbbing, unceasing, wringing pain, makes life a bed of thorns ; takes rest from the pillow, and taste out of food, and power out of every sense. A mass of pain—to such is the thinking, reasoning man reduced.

Pain, racking pain, in nerve or joint seems to be dismembering us night and day ; we wonder what is going on in that broken bone, that injured nerve, to make it feel as if a red-hot screw were being continually worked in it.

Pen and tongue fail before the mighty varieties

of pain. The pain of operations, of accidents, of gunshot wounds ; of childbirth, and of all the train of sufferings allied to it ; of inflammations ; of nerve, bone, skin and glandular diseases ; of gout, of rheumatic and neuralgic affections ; of complaints of the eye and ear, of cancer and tumor, of diseases of the vital organs ; diseases concealed from every eye. These all—oh, doubt it not!—are all and each open to the eye and sympathy of Him with whom we have to do. Our Saviour while on earth, knew pain full well ; the pain even of thirst and hunger were known to Him, and surely He who could rebuke disease and revoke death itself, could enter into the sufferings He relieved. He did—and does so truly. When your pain is so great that you try to be alone that none may see it—when you can neither read, nor think, nor pray, He is ever ready to help you. By His mercy intense pain has intervals, or cannot last very long. In those intervals pray, call upon Him, for strength and patience. If you can only say, “Lord have mercy upon me,” “Help me to bear this for Thy sake,” “Make Thyself known to me,” He will assuredly give you strength and comfort then, and for the next terrible fit of pain, if it must come.

I know you cannot read these words or any

others, you whose heads are dizzy with exceeding pain (what a reason is here to think on these things before such pain be our portion !) ; your Lord knows it also. He accepts the *thought* when the act is impossible.

Prayer is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

And for habitual pain, when devotion is not impossible, but must be very short, those divinely beautiful psalms may well afford us aid in all hours. There is, or was, an old "obedience," or sisterhood, part of whose rules it was to say whenever the clock struck : "At the — hour, and at any hour, may the holy and blessed Trinity be adored. Amen." Some such practice justly aids the heavy-footed time of a sleepless, painful night or weary day. "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" would be a better way of noting the lapse of time, than the weary sigh and change of posture which is our usual comment upon the voice that tells us that another hour is gone. Sometimes with the words comes the sweet music belonging to them into our minds, and soothes us with its well remembered harmonies, better even than the voice of our attendant, reading.

If we are alone, which is, if it be possible, far better, and our pain be of that recurring kind that remedies do not relieve, and that must run its course or "wear itself out," as the phrase is, it is well to command ourselves to lie quite still for a quarter of an hour, repeating, if we can, our Church Catechism, or the Evening Hymn, or some of Keble's musical verses ; or, if the memory be too weak for all these, the Lord's Prayer only, or this verse : " In the Lord put I my trust ; how say ye then to my soul, that she should flee as a bird unto the hill ? "

If pain thus brings us nearer to our Lord, and make us feel it well to suffer and do His will, shall it find us angry or impatient ? Trying indeed it is, and apt to recur again, and again, when we had thought it subdued ; the remedy that once resisted it seems to be worn out ; trying it is, and humiliating, for it makes us feel our utter weakness and proneness to faithlessness and discontent. There are kinds of pain less disabling, but which, nevertheless, never leave us entirely, are sometimes difficult to bear, and which are of so old a date that we do not like to mention them to others who have forgotten their very existence. Dreary is it to feel that we are only able to exert ourselves *a little* ; that any over-work or over-enjoyment increases the pain to positive

illness ; that to kneel in church, or walk for half an hour, or visit one or two sick persons, or change in any way our usual way of life, reduces us from the state of prisoners on parole, to that of manacled captives. Yet for this, too, the watchwords are Submission, Prayer, and Watchfulness. This is, indeed, a state scarcely to be called invalidism, as compared to that of others, yet it demands the aid of the same Holy Spirit, is sent by the same Father, reminds us of the same Blessed Saviour. It is a cross, and has often to be borne, not as acute and violent suffering, *instead* of other crosses, but with them. Patient acceptance will do much to make it bearable, and steady attempts to occupy ourselves for others, will do much also. We shall have no difficulty in perceiving the uses of this and every other pain, when we feel how it presses down the pride and self-will, the love of ease and praise, and this life's ambitions, that surged so long and wildly, and still surge often in our hearts. May it please God to bless our pain to our sanctification, and to lead us in the path our Saviour trod, and "lead us in His track of love."

Lady Charlotte Maria Pepys.

Fourth Wednesday.

The Ministry of Angels.

And is there care in Heaven? and is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is—else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts; but, oh! the exceeding grace
Of highest God, that loves His creatures so,
And all His works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels He sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve His wicked foe!
How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succor us that succor want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight; they watch and duly ward;
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;

And all for love, and nothing for reward ;
Oh, why should heavenly God to men have such regard !
Spenser.



THOU hast commanded Thine angels,
O Lord, to watch over my paths,
lest I "dash my foot against a
stone." They are the watchers
who pace the walls of the New Jeru-
salem, and stand around on the mountain tops ;
they watch over thy flocks, lest the lion draw
nigh and devour the souls of the faithful. They
are the inhabitants of Jerusalem (our house
above), "sent forth to minister for them who shall
be heirs of salvation." They love us as their
fellow-citizens ; keep watch over us at all times
and in all places ; carry our hopes, our fears, our
sighs, to the presence-chamber of our God.
They wander with us in all our wanderings, go
with us in and out, give careful heed that we live
justly in the midst of a perverse generation, and
"work out our own salvation with fear and trem-
bling." They help us while we labor, protect
us when we rest, encourage us if we combat,
crown us if we conquer, rejoice with us when
we rejoice in Thee, suffer with us if for Thy sake
we suffer.

Soliloquia.

How sweet it were, if, without feeble fright,
Or dying of the dreadful, beauteous sight,
An angel came to us, and we could bear
To see him issue from the silent air
At evening, in our room, and bend on ours
His divine eyes ; and bring us from his bowers
News of dear friends and children who have never
Been dead indeed, as we shall know forever.
Alas ! we think not that we daily see
About our hearths, angels that *are* to be,
Or may be, if they will, and we prepare
Their souls and ours to meet in happy air,—
A child, a friend, a wife, whose soft heart sings,
In unison with ours, breeding its future wings.

Leigh Hunt.

Fourth Thursday.

Adversity.

Who is me ! What is existence below ?
Trouble on trouble, and blow upon blow !
What is in this world save sorrowful years,
Much tribulation, and plentiful tears ?

“ As in the furnace the gold must be proved,
So, by affliction, the son that is loved :
For My true followers trouble is stored,
Nor is the servant above his own Lord.

“ Hast thou forgotten the tale thou hast read ?
I, when on earth, had no place for My head ;
This was the Cross all My life long I bare,
When the world's Maker, I banished Me there.

“ Wouldst thou but ponder the promise I make,
Willingly, joyfully, pain thou wouldst take :
That in My kingdom the joys thou mayst see
Of the Confessors who suffered for Me.”

Grant Thou Thy patience, O Jesus, to me !
Grant Thou Thy graces, my safeguard to be :
So that in all things Thy will may be mine,
Bearing all troubles, because they are Thine.

Still let me study like Thee to appear—
Still let me seek to be crucified here :
That if my anguish, like Thine, is increased,
I may sit also with Thee at Thy feast.

Medieval Hymns. Neale.



ESUS hath now many lovers of His
heavenly kingdom, but few bearers
of His cross.

He hath many desirous of com-
fort, but few of tribulation.

He findeth many companions of His table, but
few of His abstinence.

All desire to rejoice with Him ; few are willing
to endure anything for Him, or with Him.

Many follow Jesus unto the breaking of bread,
but few to the drinking of the cup of His pas-
sion.

Many reverence His miracles, few follow the
ignominy of His cross.

Many love Jesus so long as adversities happen
not.

Many praise and bless Him so long as they
receive any consolations from Him.

But if Jesus hide himself, and leave them but a little while, they fall either into complaining, or into too much dejection of mind.

But they who love Jesus for the sake of Jesus, and not for some special comfort of their own, bless Him in all tribulation and anguish of heart, as well as in the state of highest comfort.

Thomas à Kempis.

Thinkest thou to reach heaven without trial or affliction when Christ Himself suffered, and each of His faithful followers and friends has drunk of the cup of sorrow? Ask the triumphant citizens of heaven if thou wilt; all will answer, that through much tribulation and many stripes have they attained to the glory of God. Then take the yoke of the Lord upon thee; for those who love Him it is easy and light. Grasp firmly thy cross; it shall distil thee virtue, and outpour on thee the oil of grace. What wilt thou further? Behold, this is the right, the holy, the perfect way; it is the way of Christ, the way of the righteous and the elect.

Thomas à Kempis.

If we scan things rightly, we have no reason to be saddened for those worldly goods that we lose. For what is it we can lose which properly we can call ours? Job goes further: he blesseth him that taketh away, as well as him that gives, and, by a question, concludes his contentment with both. "Shall we receive good at the hands of the Lord, and not evil?" And hitherto the text clears him from being passionate for any or all of his crosses. If, after, he did fly out, it was the redarguing of his misguided friends, not his being stripped of all, that moved him. Nay, it is certain, in the rectitude of reason, we cannot lose at all. If one lend me a jewel to wear, shall I, because I use it, say it is my own? Or when my friend requires it again, shall I say I have lost it? No; I will restore it rather. Though we are pleased that we are trusted with the borrowed things of this life, we ought not to be displeased when the great Creator calls for what He has but lent us. He does us no injury that takes but his own; and he pleads an unjust title against heaven that repines at what the God of heaven resumes. It was doubtless such a consideration as this that made Zeno, when he had been shipwrecked, only to applaud fortune, and to say she had done honestly in reducing him but to his coat. Shall God afford us, all our

life long, not only food, but feasting ; not for use, but ornament ; not necessity alone, but pleasure ; and when at last He withdraws, shall we be passionate and melancholy ? If, in the blackness of the night, one by accident allows me the benefit of his light to walk by, shall I quarrel with him because he brings me not home ? I am to thank him for a little which he did not owe me, but never to be angry that he affords not more. He that hath abundance rides through the world on horseback. Perhaps he is carried with some more ease, but he runs the hazard of his beast ; and besides the casualty of his own frailty, he is subject to the danger of those stumbles that his bearer makes. He that wants a plenty does but walk on foot. He is not borne so high upon the creature, but more securely passes through the various adventures of life, and not being spurred by pricking want, may take his ease in travelling as he pleases. In all losses I would have a double prospect : I would consider what I have lost, and I would have regard to what I have left ; it may be in my loss I may find a benefit. I may be rid with it of a trouble, a snare, or danger. If it be wealth, perhaps there was a time when I had it not. Let me think if then I lived not well without it.

Let me look to what I have left. He that miscarries once will husband what is left the better. If the die of fortune hath thrown me an ill chance, let me strive to mend it by my good play. What I have is made more precious by my want of what I once was owner of. If I have lost but little, let me be thankful that I lost no more, seeing that the remainder was as flitting as the rest that is gone. He that in a battle is but slightly wounded, rather rejoices that he is got off so well than grieves that he was hurt at all. But admit it were all that is gone : a man hath hope still left, and he may as well hope to recover the things he hath lost as he did acquire them when he had them not. This will lead him to a new magazine, where he cannot deny but he may be supplied with advantage. God will be left still. And who can be poor who hath Him for his friend that hath all ? In penury a Christian can be rich ; and it is a kind of paradox to think he can be poor that is destined to be a kingdom's heir.

Felltham.

No wonder if an atheist breaks his neck thereat, whereat the foot of David himself (Psalm lxxiii.

2, 3) did almost slip when he saw the prosperity of the wicked, whom God only reprieves for punishment hereafter.

Fuller.

Danger of Riches.

I come to Thee once more, my God !
No longer will I roam ;
For I have sought the wide world through
And never found a home.

Though bright and many are the spots
Where I have built a nest,
Yet in the brightest still I pined
For more abiding rest.

Riches could bring me joy and power,
And they were fair to see ;
Yet gold was but a sorry god
To serve instead of Thee.

Then honor and the world's good word
Appeared a nobler faith ;
Yet could I rest on bliss that hung
And trembled on a breath ?

The pleasure of the passing hour
My spirit next could wile ;
But soon, full soon, my heart fell sick
Of pleasure's weary smile.

More selfish grown, I worshipped health,
The flush of manhood's power ;
But then it came and went so quick,
It was but for an hour.

And thus a not unkindly world
Hath done its best for me ;
Yet I have found, O God ! no rest,
No harbor short of Thee.

For Thou hast made this wondrous soul
All for Thyself alone ;
Ah ! send Thy sweet, transforming grace
To make it more Thine own.

Faber.



SEE the whole race of man, even from the rising to the setting sun, wearily roaming the market of the world. Some seek riches ; others, rank and authority ; others, vain ambition. How shall I apostrophize riches ? Are they not acquired with difficulty, possessed in fear, and lost with sorrow ? Behold, what vain toil for the sake of such fugitive treasure ! Though (according to the saying of the wise

man) thou art only three fingers' breadth removed from death, yet thou bravest the ocean, fliest thy country, forsakest thy parents, separatest from wife and child, forgettest the ties of friendship,—only to seek that which thou collectest, to collect what thou must lose, and after losing, shalt continually regret. Oh, children of men, how long will ye be drunken, how long will ye love vanity! What shall I say of rank and station? Thou art placed in a responsible office, thou art the head in affairs of importance—God shall demand of thee an account of thy actions; of man thou art strictly watched—spies surround thee on every side, ready at the same time to criticise and to condemn. Who can be in authority without anxieties? have much honor without many burdens? How shouldst THOU profess glory—a groveller in the dust, a creature of clay, an impure vessel? Not unto thee, not unto thee, but unto the Name of the Lord, be all honor and praise. Canst thou enjoy favor or applause without exciting envy? Behold the seeds of envy thou sowest; they over whose head thou mountest, contemplate thee with bitter and angry glances. That which flatters thee brings thee hatred; that which raises thee, in turn oppresses thee. Such is the merchandise for whose acquisition fools weary and torment them-

selves. The wise man turns his back upon the trade, binds upon it instead the denial of the world, and—goes hence.

Bernard.

Blessed are those who dwell in the world only as pilgrims and strangers. The stranger goes by the shortest route, he strives and longs to reach his home ; has he food and clothing, he is therewith content ; all else is a thing of nought. Yet higher stand those of whom the Apostle says, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God ;" the *stranger* is often detained longer than he should be by all he sees and hears on the road ; but the *dead* are insensible, though even burial should be wanting. They hear neither blame nor praise, neither flattery nor slander. Oh, blessed death, which preserves man so unspotted, yea, so completely alienated from the world ! They who no longer live in themselves must then live in Christ. For, though such are dead to all things earthly, are unconscious of them, esteem them not, have no thought for them, yet in spiritual they are living and susceptible. But, perhaps, there may be found a yet more blessed state ; and with whom shall we find it but with Him who "was caught

up into the third heaven?" Hear St. Paul: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He says not only *dead*, but "*crucified*." I to it, it to me. All that the world loves is to me a cross; fleshly desires, high rank, riches, the praise of men; what the world counts a cross, to that I cling, to that I nail myself, to that my whole soul subjects itself. Is not this position higher than either the first or the second?

Bernard.

It is most difficult to possess riches without setting the heart upon them. The desire of the Christian, as iron between the magnets, hovers between the treasures of eternity and the treasures of time. Faith draws him above, the senses drag him below. As each allurements of the senses is more powerful in contiguity than in distance, it is clear that the rich must be more led away of earthly desires than the poor; our Lord says: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." As we cannot live without some portion of temporal goods, let us employ them as the sick man his nauseous yet

necessary draught—he takes but little of it, and that unwillingly ; gladly would he dispense with it entirely. Thus also should earthly goods be distasteful to our spiritual tastes, and always preserve a bitter and unpleasant flavor. Will we serve God, we cannot love the world.

Savonarola.

I cannot call riches better than the baggage of virtue ; the Roman word is better, “impedimenta ;” for, as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue, it cannot be spared or left behind, but it hindereth the march ; yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory.

Bacon.

Fourth Friday.

Spiritual Darkness.

Not Thou from us, O Lord, but we
Withdraw ourselves from thee.

When we are dark and dead,
And Thou art covered with a cloud,
Hanging before Thee, like a shroud,
So that our prayer can find no way ;
Oh ! teach us that we do not say,
“ Where is *Thy* brightness fled ? ”

But that we search and try
What in ourselves has wrought this blame ;
For Thou remainest still the same ;

But earth's own vapors earth may fill
With darkness and thick clouds, while still
The sun is in the sky.

Trench.



YOU ask me if our Lord thinks of you, and if He looks upon you with love? Yes, He thinks of you; and not only of you, but of the least hair of your head. It is an article of faith; we must in nowise doubt of it. But I also know well that you do not doubt of it; but you only express in this way the aridity, the dryness, and insensibility in which the inferior part of your soul just now finds itself. *Indeed the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not*, said Jacob, that is to say I did not perceive it, I had no feeling of it, it did not seem to me to be so; and as to God looking on you with love, of this you have no reason to doubt, for He lovingly beholds the most horrible sinners in the world, little true desire as they have of conversion. What! tell me, have you not the intention of belonging to God? Do you not desire to serve Him faithfully? And who gives you this desire and this intention, if not Himself with His loving regard?

You ought not to examine whether your heart is pleasing to Him; but you certainly ought to

examine whether His heart is pleasing to you ; and if you look upon His heart it will be impossible for it not to please you ; for it is a heart so gentle, so sweet, so condescending, so loving towards frail creatures, provided they acknowledge their misery, so gracious towards the miserable, so good towards the penitent ; and who would not love this royal heart so full of tenderness for us !

You say well, that these temptations happen to you because your heart is without tenderness towards God ; for it is true that if you had tenderness, you would have consolation, you would not be in sorrow. But the love of God does not consist in consolation, or in tenderness, else our Lord did not love His Father when He was sorrowful even unto death, and when He cried out : *My God ! my God ! why hast Thou forsaken me ?* But it was, nevertheless, then that He made the greatest act of love that it is possible to imagine.

No doubt we should like always to have a little consolation and sugar on our food ; that is to say, to have the sentiments of love and tenderness, and consequently consolation ; but we must submit with patience to belong not to the angelic nature, but to the human. Our imperfections ought not to please us ; on the contrary, we

ought to say with the holy Apostle: *Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* But this ought neither to astonish us nor to take away our courage; we even ought to derive from it submission, humility, and mistrust of ourselves; but not discouragement, nor affliction of heart, much less mistrust of the love of God towards us; for God indeed loves not our imperfections and our venial sins, but He loves us well, notwithstanding those sins. Thus, as the weakness and infirmity of a child is not pleasing to its mother, but for all that, she not only does not cease on that account to love it, but loves it tenderly and with compassion; so, although God loves not our imperfections and our venial sins, He does not fail to love us tenderly; whence David had reason to say to God: *Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.*

Now, that is enough; live cheerfully: our Lord looks upon you, and looks upon you with love, and with so much the more tenderness, because you are weak. Never allow your mind voluntarily to nourish contrary thoughts; and when they do occur to you, do not look at them themselves: turn away your eyes from their iniquity, and return to God with a courageous humility, to speak to Him of His unspeakable

goodness with which He loveth us, poor, abject,
and weak as we are.

St. Francis de Sales.

This freezing heart, O Lord ! this will
Dry as the desert sand,
Good thoughts that will not come, bad thoughts
That come without command,—

A faith that seems not faith, a hope
That cares not for its aim ;
A love that none the hotter grows,
At Thy most Blessed Name,—

The weariness of prayer, the mist
O'er conscience overspread ;
The chill repugnance to frequent
The feast of angels' Bread,—

If all this change be Thine, O Lord !
If it be Thy sweet will,
Spare not, but to the very brim
The bitter chalice fill.

But if it hath been sin of mine,
Then show that sin to me,
Not to get back the sweetness lost,
But to make peace with Thee.

One thing alone, dear Lord ! I dread ;—
To have a secret spot
That separates my soul from Thee,
And yet to know it not.

For when the tide of graces set
So full upon my heart,
I know, dear Lord ! how faithlessly
I did my little part.

I know how well my heart hath earned
A chastisement like this,
In trifling many a grace away
In self-complacent bliss.

But if this weariness hath come
A present from on high,
Teach me to find the hidden wealth
That in its depths may lie.

So in this darkness I may learn
To tremble and adore,
To sound my own vile nothingness,
And thus to love Thee more—

To love Thee, and yet not to think
That I can love so much,—
To have Thee with me, Lord ! all day,
Yet not to feel Thy touch.

If I have served Thee, Lord ! for hire,
Hire which Thy beauty showed,
Can I not serve Thee now for naught,
And only as my God ?

Thrice blessed be this darkness then,
This deep in which I lie,
And blessed be all things that teach
God's dear supremacy !

Fourth Saturday.

The Dark Side of Death.

Alone ! To land alone upon that shore !
On which no wavelets lisp, no billows roar,
Perhaps no shape of ground,
Perhaps no sight or sound,
No forms of earth our fancies to arrange,—
But to begin alone that mighty change !

Alone ! To land alone upon that shore !
Knowing so well we can return no more ;
No voice or face of friend,
None with us to attend
Our disembarking on that awful strand,
But to arrive alone in such a land !

Alone ! To land alone upon that shore !
To begin alone to live for evermore ;
To have no one to teach
The manners or the speech

Of that new life, or put us at our ease ;—
Oh, that we might die in pairs or companies !

Faber.



BOLISH death ?”

Have we not, then, all to die ?

Yes, certainly that end is before all the living. Death, or its equivalent—death, for all generations save one ; its equivalent, a change equal to death, for that one generation which shall be alive at Christ’s advent—this is our portion, this is our prospect ; nothing which Christ has done has interfered with the working of that one universal rule of the Adam being. “ It is appointed unto men once to die.”

And what is death ? Who shall tell us what death is ?

We know how to define it ; as the dissolution of soul and body ; the snapping in twain of the twofold cord, the material body and the immaterial soul, which is our link to the living ; the departure of that soul, the presence of which is life, from the house of this tabernacle, and the dropping down of the dead weight of the body upon the earth from which it was taken.

And we can say even more of the circumstances of death. We can tell of the gradual or the more sudden approach of that last enemy ;

of his coming as we have seen it in a decay of strength, a contraction of the daily walk, first within the four walls, then to the chamber, then to the bed, at last to the coffin; and (what is even worse) a slow but perceptible numbing of the faculties, enfeebling of the memory and reason, narrowing of the range of thought, and confining of the flight of mind, till at last we begin to say, what will be left for eternity and heaven? or else of his coming as we have seen it in youth or in middle age, through infection, through fever, through accident, through sin—when reason has been upset on her throne, or held down trembling upon it (according to that wonderful saying), by a frenzy seated beside her; or else, it may be, has simply slumbered, drugged by disease or by its remedies, and has so passed away without word or sign to tell whither the man was going, or whether, indeed, any whither. These things we have seen, and we have thought, perhaps, that we saw death in seeing them, when in reality they were all but circumstances and accidents of the very thing itself; and we turned from that death-bed, or came back from that grave, just as ignorant of the essential nature of that mighty change which is before each one of us, as if, indeed, we had heard nothing, seen nothing, and felt nothing.

And yet, I say, this change—this mysterious, unknown, secret change which we call death, which we define, and of which we daily see the circumstances and the consequences, this change is before each one of us. In some way, at some time, we must all, we must each die.

This prospect affects different men very differently.

Some men are reckless of it. They not only forget, they even despise it. They not only do many things which they would not do if they expected it; they not only trifle with health of mind and body; they not only wanton with sin, and brave consequences, and defy judgment, but they even, in the boldness of a constitutional hardihood, will risk life itself, or give away life itself, without a fear of the thing called dying, and without an apprehension of that “undiscovered country” which they know lies beyond it.

Other men are but too mindful of it, if they can be. They are timid about infection; they tremble at the first touch of illness; they shrink from the mention of disease; they will leave any symptom unexplored and untraced within them rather than incur the possibility that the physician may look grave over the indication, and hint the existence of that malady which is to ring the knell of life.

On the whole, an Apostle teaches us that the fear of death is a predominant feeling in man's nature. He says that Christ came to "deliver those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." It is natural to fear death. Death is one of those real dangers which lose not, but rather gain, by a close and thoughtful inspection. It is a very serious matter, that within seventy years at the furthest, all but one or two of my readers will be in their graves, unless they shall have risen. It is a solemn thought, that more surely than that any one of us will lie down to sleep to-night, or rise from sleep to-morrow, each one of us will have to pass through, separately and alone, that act of dying, and that state of death, of which there is no one to tell us either the nature or the consequences. No one comes back from death to enlighten us as to its essence ; and if such a return were ordained for any, he could not make us understand ; he could not put us, in imagination or in knowledge, in the place which each one must occupy some day by actual experience. Such a prospect is serious ; only a fool can despise it. The fear of death is the natural feeling ; and from that fear grows (the Apostle says) bondage. A man feels himself a slave. Here is a necessity which he cannot evade. Here is a thing to be

borne, and a state to be entered, which he can neither avoid by skill, nor refuse by resolution, nor even know beforehand, by any study, any philosophy, or any devotion. A man who is liable to this cannot be called free. Through fear of death, he is all his lifetime subject to bondage.

We hardly consider how dark the grave must have been before Christ came.

I know that a few of the ancient philosophers thought out by reasoning, and taught as a dogma of their science, the truth of a life after death. It was a noble triumph of the unassisted reason. That man should have thus argued out, by pure philosophy, the tenet of his own immortality, seems to say to us that Scripture must indeed be true, which tells us that God created man in His own image, after His own likeness—the image of His intelligence, the likeness of His reason, and of His foresight, and of His reflection.

And yet, if we read one of those writings in which the immortality of the soul is argued out by the greatest of Greek philosophers, I think we shall say that his argument could convince no one—could scarcely have convinced himself. Inaccessible by its subtlety to the common multitude, it must have been unsatisfactory by its fancifulness to the privileged few. It was a

sound conclusion from unsound premises. It could scarcely be dignified with a higher praise than this, "that it was one guess amongst many" of the highest philosophy of Greece. Woe to the man who has to lean his whole weight for eternity upon such a basis ! If instinct does not teach immortality, we shall look in vain for it in philosophy.

And even in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, a life, after death, can scarcely be said to be made the subject of express revelation. I know that there are passages, neither few nor doubtful, which imply it ; hopes expressed by righteous men, for themselves, of a life with God hereafter, and intimations in the Prophets of an immortality for man, chiefly in the form of similitudes applied to the resuscitation of nations. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself teaches us to look for these things in the Old Testament, and finds them for us in places where they might have escaped our research.

But, I will venture to say this, that there is no such thing in the Old Testament Scriptures (till Gospel light is thrown upon them), as an abolition of death, and a bringing of life and immortality to light.

Vaughan.

Fourth Sunday.

The Bright Side of Death.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Like the bright slanting west,
Thou ledest down into the glow
Where all those heaven-bound sunsets go,
Ever from toil to rest.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Back to our own dear dead,
Into that land which hides in tombs
The better part of our old homes ;
'Tis there thou mak'st our bed.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Thither where sorrows cease,
To a new life, to an old past,
Softly and silently we haste,
Into a land of peace.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Thy new restores our lost ;
There are voices of the new times
With the ringing of the old chimes
Blent sweetly on thy coast.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
One faint for want of breath,—
And above thy promise thou hast given ;
All, we find more than all in heaven,
O thou truth-speaking Death !

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
E'en children after play
Lie down without the least alarm,
And sleep in thy maternal arm,
Their little life away.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
E'en grown-up men secure
Better manhood, by a brave leap
Through the chill mist of thy thin sleep,—
Manhood that will endure.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
The old, the very old,
Smile when their slumberous eye grows dim,
Smile when they feel thee touch each limb,—
Their age was not less cold.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Ever from pain to ease ;
Patience, that hath held on for years,
Never unlearns her humble fears
Of terrible disease.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
From sin to pleasing God ;
For the pardoned in thy land are bright
As innocence in robe of white,
And walk on the same road.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Straight to our Father's Home ;
All loss were gain that gained us this,
The sight of God, that single bliss
Of the grand world to come.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Ever from toil to rest,—
Where a rim of sea-like splendor runs,
Where the days bury their golden suns,
In the dear hopeful west.

Faber.

“ For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.”



Y friends, I beg you to notice the feeling with which the holy Apostle here considers life and death. Notice first this, which serves him as a starting-point, and which is the motto of his Christian life : “ For me to live is Christ and to die is gain ; ” that is to say, my life, my natural life which I live to-day, and which I may lose to-morrow, is employed in nothing else but in following and serving Jesus Christ. To die—it is a gain. This needs no explanation.

Above, the Apostle asks whether it is better for him to live or die. This question often presents itself to us, and perhaps we have answered as the Apostle did. But, it is to be feared, in a very different spirit. When we have wished for death, it has meant, "I do not know which I should dread most, the afflictions of life, from which death will deliver me, or the terrors of death, from which life preserves me." In short that life and death seem to us two evils, between which we can with difficulty decide. While to the Apostle, they seem two great blessings, between which he cannot choose. Personally, he desires to die, to be with Christ. While for the Church and for the world, he desires to live, to serve Christ, to extend his dominion and to gain souls for him. What a beautiful view of death; beautiful, because it is all governed, all sanctified by love; because it is the view taken by Christ himself.

Let us try to enter into this sentiment. Life is good; death is good. Death is good, because it sets us free from the misery of this life, and above all, because, let life be as full as it may be of earthly joys, death conducts us into a joy and a glory of which we cannot even dream. We ought then to look upon death as upon something desirable in itself. We should not put

from us all that would recall it. All the maladies, all the sudden deaths, all that goes on around us, should remind us, that to each one of us it may come at any moment.

Life also is good, because it gives us power to serve Christ, to glorify Christ, to follow Christ's example. Life is not worth living for anything else. All that we have of strength, of breath, of life, of talent, should be consecrated, devoted, sanctified, crucified for the service of our Lord Christ. This crucified life is a life of happiness, even in the midst of the bitterest sorrows of earth ; for in it we can taste and diffuse around us the most precious benedictions. Let us love life, let us feel the worth of life, only to fill it with Christ Jesus. To have this feeling, the Holy Ghost must renew and transform us. But remember, it is not only our spirit that ought to be sustained, consoled, strengthened, it is the Spirit of God which must come and take up its abode in us. We often endeavor to work upon ourselves, to adorn our own souls ; it is well, but it is not enough. Something more is necessary ; it is necessary that Jesus Christ Himself inhabit our hearts by His Holy Spirit.

O my friends, if you consider what the promises of the Gospel are, you will see how far you are from truly enjoying and possessing them.

Oh, that God would open the heaven above our heads, and reveal all to us, fill us with all wisdom, make us see that, even here below, we can attain to perfect joy, while waiting for the fulness of felicity and victory. That He will make us reap the blessings which heaven is pleased to shed upon the earth, which opens her bosom to receive them ! That He will make us realize that if the earth is capable of beating down and troubling us, it is not capable of extinguishing the lights of heaven, nor of annihilating the promises of God, nor of throwing a veil, no, not even the lightest cloud, over the love with which God has loved us in Jesus Christ !

Adolphe Monod.

Fourth Monday.

Words.

Prune thou thy words, the thoughts control
That o'er thee swell and throng;
They will condense within thy soul,
And change to purpose strong.

But he, who lets his feelings run
In soft luxurious flow,
Shrinks when hard service must be done,
And faints at every woe.

Faith's meanest deed more favor bears,
Where hearts and wills are weighed,
Than brightest transports, choicest prayers,
Which bloom their hour and fade.

Lyra Apostolica.



FIFTENTIMES I could wish that I
had held my peace when I have
spoken, and that I had not been in
company.

Why do we so willingly speak
and talk one with another, when notwithstanding

we seldom return to silence without hurt of conscience.

The cause why we so willingly talk, is for that by discoursing one with another we seek to receive comfort one of another, and desire to ease our minds overwearied with sundry thoughts.

And we very willingly talk and think of those things which we most love or desire ; or of those which we feel most contrary (or troublesome) unto us.

But, alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end ; for this outward comfort is the cause of no small loss of inward and divine consolation.

Therefore we must watch and pray, lest our time pass away idly.

If it be lawful and expedient for thee to speak, speak those things that may edify.

An evil custom and neglect of our own good doth give too much liberty to inconsiderate speech.

Yet religious discourses of spiritual things do greatly further our spiritual growth, especially when persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God.

Thomas à Kempis.

What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him? A great gulf were fixed between us and our fellow-men did not words, as a lever, interchange thought from heart to heart. Wonderful is this, but yet more wonderful that each needs these words for his own necessities. Who does not require them, to recall his soul, control his reason, collect his thoughts? Who does not require to be excited by complaints, admonished by rebukes, assaulted by threats? Who does not often make such confession in words as, "from Him cometh my salvation?" Who does not console himself as the Psalmist, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?" My heart forsakes me, therefore I must commune with myself as with another, till it return and again animate me. Not until we have reached the fulness of our stature in Christ shall we cease to need words. Where "the middle wall of partition" is broken down, through the love of the eternal mediation, there the interposition of words will no longer be necessary.

Bernard.

None should spend their time in idle conversation. Words fly forth and cannot be recalled;

time speeds onward and never returns. A fool does not consider the value of what he fritters. "We will talk," saith he, "until the hour passes." "Till the hour passes!"—which a merciful Creator yet gives thee to repent of sin, to seek grace, to prepare for eternity; till the time hastens by in which thou mightest win God's love, partake of the communion of spirits, bewail a lost inheritance, gird up the yielding will, and weep for sins committed. Does the peasant indolently recline, passing his hours in idleness, when favorable seasons summon him to the harvest or the vineyard? Does the peddler stand with hands crossed upon his breast when the fair-time draws near? Do beggars seek corners of the streets in which to conceal themselves when alms are being distributed? Yet did the matter rest here, only this world's time were lost; many, alas! lose with it life itself; nor only this, they rob their brethren of it also.

Bernard.

One of the saints asked a monk to teach him a psalm. He began with that, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue." Having learnt the first verse, he asked to have it explained; and having heard the expla-

nation, said he would not learn any more till he had done what this first verse commanded, and would afterwards learn the rest. He did not return for several years, and the monk meeting him, asked why he did not learn the rest of the psalm ; he replied, he had not yet done what was contained in the first verse.

Savonarola.

Fourth Tuesday.

Meditation.

Open, Lord, my inward ear,
And bid my heart rejoice !
Bid my quiet spirit hear
Thy comfortable voice ;
Never in the whirlwind found,
Or where earthquakes rock the place ;
Still and silent is the sound,
The whisper of thy grace !

From the world of sin and noise
And hurry, I withdraw ;
For the small and inward voice
I wait with humble awe :
Silent am I now, and still
Dare not in thy presence move :

To my waiting soul reveal
The secret of thy love !

Charles Wesley.



EDITATION he calls by a highly refined metaphor, "the sleep of the soul," because it refreshes the mind, as rest does the body ; and again, as in bodily sleep, the operations of the body do not act beyond themselves, but are restrained within the limits of the body, so, says the youthful saint, "I will keep all my spiritual faculties within the limits of the spirit." This is a passage full of the most suggestive wisdom, and containing one of the choicest rules of meditation, inculcating that drawing of the mind from things of sense, which St. Catharine of Sienna, called the building of a cell within her heart, and which another holy person, B. Leonardo Fattore, signified by this expression, "the land of faith." The "land of faith" was a certain state of the soul, calm, equable, and penetrated with the conviction of the truth of religion, in which he placed it occasionally when in the midst of the business and trials of life. To return, however, to Francis. If he cannot find time at the usual hour for this "most vigilant sleep of the soul," he resolves to deprive himself of a portion of his bodily sleep in order to

it, either by remaining awake after he goes to bed, or rousing himself after his first sleep, or rising earlier than usual. He provides beautiful thoughts for himself from the sacred Scriptures if he chances to wake during the night ; I will rouse my heart with the words : *Media nocte clamor factus est : Ecce sponsus venit, exite obviam ei* : “ At midnight there was a cry made : Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet Him ! ” Then, from the consideration of the darkness outside of me, passing on to the inward darkness of my soul, and of all sinners, thus I will pray during the night : *Illuminare his qui in tenebris, &c.* ; “ To enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to direct our feet into the way of peace.” He adds : “ But since nightly terrors sometimes hinder the acts of such devotion, if I chance to be seized with them, I will deliver myself from them by thinking of my angel-guardian, saying, *Dominus a dextris meis est, ne commovear* ; which some doctors have interpreted of the angel-guardian.”

The subjects which he marks down for meditation, though not differing from those to be found in ordinary books (which, indeed, have ever since his time been much colored by his writings), are expressed in a highly original manner. Thus

he resolves, when he has an opportune time for this "holy quiet," to recall the pious emotions, longings, desires, resolutions, sweetnesses, and inspirations which he has formerly received from the Divine Majesty; and also to call to mind how great his obligation is to Almighty God, "in that in His mercy He has at times weakened my senses by some diseases and infirmities, which have been of no little advantage to me." There is also a short and admirable reflection on the excellence of Christian virtue, "which sanctifies a man, which changes him into an angel, which makes him a little God (*deulum*), which in this life confers paradise on him." Lastly, are some wonderful thoughts on the attributes of God. "I will contemplate," he says, "the infinite wisdom, omnipotence, and incomprehensible goodness of God; but I will specially aim at this, how these excellent attributes shine forth in the sacred mysteries of the life, death, and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the imitable perfections of the faithful servants of God. Passing from thence to the empyrean heaven, I will marvel at the glory of paradise, the unfailing felicity of the angelic spirits, and of the souls of the blessed; and how the most august Trinity, in the eternal rewards wherewith It remunerates this blessed multitude, shows Itself powerful, wise, and good."

Life of St. Francis de Sales. Ormsby.

There is a millstone which ceaselessly turns. The Master has commanded his servants to grind upon it only the best of grain—wheat, barley, or oats. An enemy watches the stone, and so often as he perceives it empty, he either sprinkles it with sand, which corrodes it, or pitch, which clogs it, or chaff, which occupies it uselessly. Now hear what this parable teaches. The grindstone is the human heart, which is continually revolving in thought. God has commanded every man to meditate only upon good. Deep and peaceful reflection on the things of God is like the wheat; the consecrating of the soul to devotion is the barley; virtuous resolutions the oats. Thus should mankind prepare for themselves eternal food. But the devil is continually watching, and if he finds the heart empty of good thoughts for an instant by its spiritual occupants, immediately he pours in a flood of evil thoughts. Some consume it, as wrath and envy; others obscure it, as dissipation and luxury; others occupy it profitlessly, as vain ambition.

Anselm.

Fifth Wednesday.

The Mother of our Lord.

Blest among women is thy lot ;
But higher meed we yield thee not,
Nor more than woman's name.

Nor solemn "Hail" to thee we pay,
Nor prayer to thee for mercy pray,
Nor hymn of glory raise ;
Nor thine we deem is God's high throne,
Nor thine the birthright of thy Son,
The Mediator's praise.

Mother of Jesus, Parent dear !
If aught of earthly thou couldst hear,
If aught of human see ;
What pangs thy humble heart must wring

To know thy Saviour, God, and King,
Dishonored thus for thee !

Bishop Mant.



T. LUKE the Evangelist was early regarded as the great authority with respect to the few Scripture particulars relating to the character and life of Mary ; so that in the figurative sense he may be said to have *painted* that portrait of her which has been since received as the perfect type of womanhood :—1. Her noble, trustful humility when she receives the salutation of the angel (Luke i. 38) ; the complete and feminine surrender of her whole being to the higher, holier will—"Be it unto me according to thy word." 2. Then the decision and prudence of character, shown in her visit to Elizabeth, her older relative ; her journey in haste over the hills to consult with her cousin, which journey it is otherwise difficult to accord with the oriental customs of the time, unless Mary, young as she was, had possessed unusual promptitude and energy of disposition. (Luke i. 39, 40.) 3. The proof of her intellectual power in the beautiful hymn she has left us : "My soul doth magnify the Lord." (Luke i. 46.) The commentators are not agreed as to whether this effusion was poured forth by imme-

diate inspiration, or composed and written down, because the same words, "and Mary said," may be interpreted in either sense ; but we can no more doubt of her being the authoress than we can doubt of any other particulars recorded in the same Gospel ; it proves that she must have been, for her time and country, most rarely gifted in mind, and deeply read in the Scriptures. 4. She was of a contemplative, reflecting, rather silent disposition. "She kept all these sayings and pondered them in her heart." (Luke ii. 51.) She made no boast of that wondrous and most blessed destiny to which she was called ; she thought upon it in silence. It is inferred that as many of these sayings and events could be known to herself alone, St. Luke the Evangelist could have learned them only from her own lips. 5. Next, her truly maternal devotion to her Divine Son, whom she attended humbly through his whole ministry. 6, and lastly, the sublime fortitude and faith with which she followed her Son to the death-scene, stood beside the cross till all was finished, and then went home and lived (Luke xxiii.) ; for she was to be to us an example of all that a woman could endure, as well as all that a woman could be and act out in her earthly life. (John xix. 25.)

Such was the character of Mary ; such the

portrait really *painted* by St. Luke ; and as it seems to me, these scattered, artless, unintentional notices of conduct and character converge into the most perfect moral type of the intellectual, tender, simple, and heroic woman that ever was placed before us for our edification and example.

Mrs. Jameson.

“ **O Lady** of the passion, dost thou weep !

What help can we then through our tears survey,
If such as thou a cause for wailing keep ?

What help, what hope for us, sweet Lady, say ?

‘ Good man, it doth befit thy heart to lay

More courage next it, having seen me so.

All other hearts find other balm to-day—

The whole world’s consolation is my woe ! ’ ”

Mother ! whose virgin bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied !
Woman ! above all women glorified ;
Our tainted nature’s solitary boast ;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost,
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemish’d moon
Before her wane begins on heaven’s blue coast,
Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,

Not unforgiven, the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible Power in which did blend
All that was mix'd and reconcil'd in thee,
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene.

Wordsworth.

Fifth Thursday.

Prayer in the Morning.

—— Then I must up ——

To matins and to work.——

Thank God that one was born at this same hour
Who did our work for us. We'll talk of Him ;
We shall go mad with thinking of ourselves.
We'll talk of Him, and of that new-made star,
Which, as He stooped into the Virgin's side,
From off His finger, like a signet-gem,
He dropped in the empyrean for a sign.
But the first tear He shed at this His birth-hour,
When He crept weeping forth to see our woe,
Fled up to Heaven in mist, and hid forever
Our sins, our works, and that same new-made star.

Kingsley.

As now my soul doth shake
Dull sleep out of her eyes ;
So let Thy Spirit me awake,
That I from sin may rise.
The night is past away,
Which filled us full of fears ;
And we enjoy the glorious day,
Wherein Thy grace appears.



HERE is no doubt but prayer is needful daily, ever profitable, and at all times commendable. If it be for ourselves alone, it is necessary ; and it is charitable when it is for others. At night, it is our covering ; in the morning, it is our armor. So, at all times it defends us from the malice of Satan, our own subornations and betrayings, the unequal weather that the world assaults us with, and preserves us in the favor and esteem of Heaven. We are dependents upon the court, while we are but petitioners there ; so, till we be denied and dismissed, we have the protection thereof, which certainly is a privilege that a stranger cannot claim.

And albeit prayer should be the key of the day and the lock of the night, yet I hold it, of the two, more needful in the morning than when in the evening we commit ourselves to repose. It is true we have enough to induce us to it then.

The day could not but present us with something either worthy our thanks, or that needed our begging and pardon, for removing or continuing something ; and though we be immured with walls and darkness, yet we are not exempted so from perils, but that, without our God's assistance, we are left a prey to all that is at enmity with man. Besides, sleep is the image or shadow of death ; and when the shadow is so near, the substance cannot be far remote. The dying Gorgias being in a slumber, and asked by a friend how he did, he answered, " Pretty well ; only sleep is recommending me up to his brother." Some, we know, in health have gone to rest eternal ; and without thinking of the other world, have taken their leave of this, not knowing themselves that they were on their way, till they had fully dispatched their journey.

But notwithstanding all this, a man at rest in his chamber, like a sheep impenned in the fold, is subject only to unusual events, and such as rarely happen ; to the emissions of the more immediate and unavoidable hand of God. Danger seems shut out of doors ; we are secured from the injury of the elements, and guarded with a fence of iron against the force of such as would invade. We are removed from the world's bustle and the crowd of occasions that jostle against us

as we walk abroad. He that is barred up in his house, is in his garrison with his guard about him, and not so soon attacked by his enemy as he that roves in the open and unsheltered field. Who knows not the ship to be safer in the bay or harbor, than tossed and beaten in the boiling ocean? Retiredness is more safe than business. We are withdrawn when the veil of night and rest enwraps us in their dark and silent cabinet.

But with the sun we do disclose, and are discovered to our prying enemies. We go abroad to meet what at home does not look after us. He that walks through a fair of beasts is in hazard to be gored, or kicked, or bruised, or beaten. We pass through briers, and thorns, and nettles that will prick, and scratch, and sting. We are in the day as travelling through a wilderness, where wild and savage creatures are, as well as tamer animals. All the world is Africa, where heat and drought, venom, or something new, does still disturb us. The air, the fire, the earth, and water are apter all to wound us. The frays, the trains, the incitements, the opportunity, the occasions of offence, the lures and temptings from abroad, and the businesses and accidents of life, deny us any safety, but what we have from the favor of protective Providence.

Felltham.

When first thy eyes unveil, give thy soul leave
To do the like : our bodies but forerun
The spirit's duty ; true hearts spread and heave
Unto their God, as flowers do to the sun.
Give Him thy first thoughts, then, so shalt thou keep
Him company all day, and in Him sleep.

Yet never sleep the sun up ; prayer should
Dawn with the day : there are set awful hours
'Twixt Heaven and us ; the manna was not good
After sun-rising ; far day sullies flowers.
Rise to prevent the sun ; sleep doth sins glut,
And Heaven's gate opens when the world's is shut.

Walk with thy fellow-creatures ; note the hush
And whisperings amongst them. Not a spring
Or leaf but hath his morning hymn ; each bush
And oak doth know I Am. Canst thou not sing ?
Oh, leave thy cares and follies ! Go this way,
And thou art sure to prosper all the day.

Serve God before the world ; let Him not go
Until thou hast a blessing ; then resign
The whole unto Him, and remember who
Prevail'd by wrestling ere the sun did shine ;
Pour oil upon the stones, weep for thy sin,
Then journey on, and have an eye to Heaven.

When the world's up, and every swarm abroad,
Keep well thy temper, mix not with each clay ;
Dispatch necessities ; life hath a load
Which must be carried on, and safely may ;
Yet keep those cares without thee ; let the heart
Be God's alone, and choose the better part.

Vaughan.

Fifth Friday.

The Hiding of God's Face.

All night the lonely suppliant prayed,
All night his earnest crying made ;
Till, standing by his side at morn,
The Tempter said in bitter scorn :—
“ Oh, peace ! what profit do you gain
From empty words and babblings vain ?
‘ Come, Lord—oh, come ! ’ you cry alway ;
You pour your heart out night and day ;
Yet still no murmur of reply—
No voice that answers, ‘ Here am I. ’ ”

Then sank that stricken heart in dust,
That word had withered all its trust ;
No strength retained it now to pray,
For Faith and Hope had fled away.
And ill that mourner now had fared,
Thus by the Tempter's art ensnared,
But that at length beside his bed
His sorrowing angel stood, and said :—
“ Doth it repent thee of thy love,
That never now is heard above

Thy prayer, that now not any more
It knocks at heaven's gate as before ?”

—“I am cast out—I find no place,
No hearing at the throne of grace.
‘Come, Lord—oh, come !’ I cry alway ;
I pour my heart out night and day ;
Yet never until now have won
The answer—‘Here am I, my son.’”

—Oh, dull of heart ! enclosed doth lie,
In each ‘Come, Lord,’ a ‘Here am I.’
Thy love, thy longing, are not thine,
Reflections of a love divine :
Thy very prayer to thee was given,
Itself a messenger from heaven.
Whom God rejects, they are not so ;
Strong hands are round them in their woe ;
Their hearts are bound with bands of brass,
That sigh or crying cannot pass.
All treasures did the Lord impart
To Pharaoh, save a contrite heart :
All other gifts unto his foes
He freely gives, nor grudging knows ;
But Love's sweet smart, and costly pain,
A treasure for his friends remain.”

Trench.



AT the birth of our Saviour, the shepherds heard the angelical and divine chants of those celestial spirits Scripture says so. It is not said, however, that the Blessed Virgin, and St. Joseph, who were nearest the Child, heard

the voice of the angels, or saw those miraculous lights ; on the contrary, instead of hearing the angels sing, they heard the Infant cry, and saw, by some borrowed light, the eyes of that divine Infant all covered with tears, and chilled with the rigor of the cold. Now, I ask you in good faith, would you not have chosen to be in the stable, dark as it was, but resounding with the cries of that divine Infant, than to be with the shepherds, swooning with gladness and joy at the sweetness of that celestial music, and the beauty of that admirable light ?

Yes ; *it is good for us*, said St. Peter, *to be here*, to see the transfiguration ; and the Blessed Virgin was not there, but only on the hill of Calvary, where she saw nothing but deaths, thorns, nails, weaknesses, marvellous darknesses, abandonments, and derelictions. Enough on this subject. I pray you, love God crucified in the midst of darkness. Let us make here three tabernacles—one for our Lord, another for the Blessed Virgin, and another for St. John. Three crosses only ; and place yourself near that of the Son, or near that of the Virgin, or near that of the disciple, you will be everywhere welcome with the other daughters who are standing all around.

St. Francis de Sales.

Souls who sincerely love God are often, when still in the body, granted a near communion with His Presence ; but never is it enduring or complete. The Lord seems almost to be sporting with His children ; when they think to embrace Him firmly, He glides from their grasp, till again He is recalled by their tears and entreaties. Joyful, indeed, is His gracious presence ; so much the more grievous His absence. But what is the state of the soul if, when quite deprived of light from on high, it finds itself fast being entangled in the snares of a world of sense ? Does it not appear as if exiled from its native land, banished to a distant shore, where love grows cold, sensuality reigns, and the eye of the understanding is darkened ? There it mourns in anguish, heaving deep and bitter sighs ; so much the more richly it has received, so much the greater now the deprivation. Starvation overpowers the loving soul when its necessary food—the object of devotion—is withdrawn. Vain is it to seek to alleviate grief such as this by the application of any external means ; vain to endeavor to hush such sorrow. With Job it despises such “miserable comforters,” and exclaims, with the Psalmist, “My soul refuses to be comforted.” Only from within can these wounds be healed. Blessed, indeed, is that sorrow which

does not lament over the miseries of this life, which relates not to the creature but the Creator. Others derive consolation from the fugitive things of time ; the loving soul alone requires none but the fulness of Him who dwells within—the God of love. For though hidden, He is yet present ; and though concealed for the time, it is but for the better perfecting of the Spirit.

Richard of St. Victor.

Fifth Saturday.

The Ministers of God's Word.

The holy Lenten time is now far spent ;
 And from the muffled altars everywhere,
 Full many a warning voice has bid, prepare
 The Lord's highway, and cried aloud, Repent !
 And be your hearts and not your garments rent ;
 And turn unto the Lord, your God, with prayer.
 Not, as aforetime, are the contrite sent
 To sackcloth, ashes, and the shirt of hair,
 Or knotted thong ; but consciences laid bare,
 And lowly minds, and knees in secret bent,
 And fasts in spirit, mark the penitent.
 Let not the broken-hearted then despair ;
 The sighs of those who worthily lament
 Their sins, reach Heaven, and are accepted there.

Croswell.



WOULD have you, moreover, give great honor to those who announce to us the word of God: we certainly are under a great obligation to do so; for they are heavenly messengers, who come on God's part to teach us

the way of salvation. We ought to regard them as such, and not as mere men ; for, although they speak not with the eloquence of heavenly men, we must not on that account abate aught of that humility and reverence with which we are bound to accept the Word of God, which is always the same—as pure and as holy as if it were spoken and delivered by angels.

I observe that if I write to a friend on bad paper, and consequently with bad handwriting, I am thanked as affectionately for my letter as if I wrote on better paper, and with the finest characters in the world. And why is this, but because my friend does not care about the paper or the handwriting being bad, but only cares about the writer ?

We ought to act in the same way with regard to the word of God. We must not consider who it is that is preaching to us ; it ought to be enough for us that God makes use of this preacher to proclaim His word to us ; and since we see that God honors him so much as to speak by his mouth, how can we fail in respecting and honoring him !

St. Francis de Sales.

Though preaching, in its elocutive part, be but the conception of man, and differs as the gifts

and abilities of men give it lustre or depression ; and many hearers, for their knowledge, are able to instruct their teachers ; yet, as it puts us in mind of our duties that may perhaps be out of our thoughts, and as it is the ordinance of God, and may quicken and enliven our conversation, we owe it both our reverence and attention. And though we may think our education and parts have set us in a higher form than it hath done him that does ascend the pulpit ; yet without a derogation to our own endowments, as in other arts, so in that of divinity, we may well conceive, he that makes it his trade and calling should better understand it, and is likely to be more perfect in it, than he that hath inspection therein but by the by and obviously. Arts perfect are by exercise and industry. A man is born a child, and does by tendance and improving time creep up to full maturity ; so arts at first are infant things, till, filed and garnished, they burnish out in perfection. Even in matter-of-fact, they have easier and nearer ways to do things who, with assiduity and practice, are still intent upon them, than can by those be thought on that are strangers to the profession.

And these considerations may certainly content us to hear sometimes the meaner-parted preach. The Apostle allows it the foolishness

of preaching ; yet it was the way that peopled all the world with Christianity. It bruised the staunch philosopher, and brought the wilful pagan off from all his idols. It topped the soaring eagle with the cross, and bowed the lofty conqueror to his knee and tears. And what know we but sometimes our corruptions may be let out by a poor brass pin, as well as by the dexterous hand that guides a silver lancet. He that is our spiritual physician is not confined to any certain instrument that he will use to cure us with ; and if we, out of copper, lead, or pewter preaching, can extract pure gold, I take it is no impeachment to our wise philosophy. Surely they are not right, that because they cannot hear such as they would, will therefore come at none. I will hear a good one if I can ; but rather hear an easy one than not to hear at all. He abandons his cure that refuses to come at his surgeon.

That cloth can never be white that lies where dewes do never fall upon it. I observe those that leave the church assemblies, so they be not heretical, do grow at last to leave religion too. The righteous man, by the unwise actions of others, does grow wiser ; even out of weakness he can gather strength. Now, the great King of heaven entertains not fools for His followers ; if they be

not wise before they come, yet they are wise in coming; and then, for that, He makes them so for ever after. It is a prerogative belongs to His servants; those that pay Him their obedience He does reward with wisdom and understanding. It was by keeping His commandments that David's wisdom did exceed his teachers'! He that hath wisdom to be truly religious, cannot be condemned a fool. Every precept of Christianity is a maxim of profoundest prudence. It is the gospel's work to reduce man to the principles of his first creation; that is, to be both good and wise. Our ancestors, it seems, were clear of this opinion. He that was pious and just was reckoned a righteous man. Godliness and integrity was called and counted righteousness. And in their old Saxon-English, "righteous" was "right-wise," and "righteousness" was originally "right-wiseness." It is the fear of God that is the beginning of wisdom; and all that seek it have a good understanding. It is to be presumed the merchant that sold all to buy the pearl, was as well wise as rich. Those, therefore, that withdraw from the means altogether, which, in ordinary, is preaching, or are long livers under it unprofitably, by degrees grow strangers to it, and dislike it.

It is an aphorism in physic, that they who, in

the beginning of diseases, eat much and mend not, fall at last to a general loathing of food. The moral is as true in divinity. He that hath a sick conscience, and lives a hearer under a fruitful ministry, if he grow not sound, he will learn to despise the Word. When food converts not into nourishment, it will not be long before the body languisheth. Blessings neglected in the van, do troop in curses in the rear and sequel ; but when contemned, vengeance. Who neglects the good he may have, shall find the evil that he would avoid. Justly he sits in darkness, that would not light his taper when the fire burned clearly. Offers of mercy slighted, prepare the way for judgments. We deeply charge ourselves ; yet are we more incapable of clearing our accounts. He that needs counsel, and will not deign to lend a listening ear, destines himself to misery, and is the willing author of his own sad woe. Continue at a stay, we cannot ; corruption neither mends itself, nor leaves to be so till it bring destruction. The fire followed Lot's neglected preaching. Capernaum's fate was heavier for her miracles. Desperate is his estate that hates the thing should help him. If ever you see a drowning man refuse help, conclude him a wilful murderer. When God offers more than He is obliged to, we ought by all the

ways we can to meet so glorious mercies. To the burying of such treasures there belongs a curse; to their misspending, punishment and confusion.

Felltham.

Judge not the preacher; for he is thy judge:

If thou mislike him, thou conceivest him not.

God calleth preaching, folly. Do not grudge

To pick out treasures from an earthen pot.

The worst speak something good: if all want sense,

God takes a text, and preacheth patience.

Herbert.

In sermon, the good parishioner sets himself to hear God in the minister. Therefore divesteth he himself of all prejudice, the jaundice in the eyes of the soul, presenting colors false unto it. He hearkens very attentively. 'Tis a shame when the church itself is "cœmeterium;" wherein the living sleep above ground, as the dead do beneath.

At every point that concerns himself, he turns down a leaf in his heart, and rejoiceth that God's Word hath pierced him; as hoping that whilst his soul smarts, it heals. And as it is no man-

ners for him that hath good venison before him to ask whence it came, but rather fairly to fall to it; so, hearing an excellent sermon, he never inquires whence the preacher had it, or whether it was not before in print, but falls aboard to practise it.

Fuller.

Fifth Sunday.

A Lord's Day.

① day of rest and gladness,
O day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness,
Most beautiful, most bright ;
On thee, the high and lowly,
Through ages joined in tune,
Sing, Holy, Holy, Holy,
To the great God Triune.

On thee, at the creation,
The Light had first its birth ;
On thee, for our salvation,
Christ rose from depths of earth ;
On thee, our Lord victorious
The Spirit sent from heaven,
And thus, on thee most glorious,
A triple light was given.

Thou art a port protected
From storms that round us rise,
A garden intersected
With streams of paradise ;
Thou art a cooling fountain,
In life's dry, dreary sand ;
From thee, like Pisgah's mountain,
We view our promised land.

Thou art a holy ladder,
Where angels go and come ;
Each Sunday finds us gladder,
Nearer to Heaven, our home.
A day of sweet refection
Thou art, a day of love,
A day of resurrection
From earth to things above.

To-day on weary nations
The heavenly Manna falls ;
To holy convocations
The silver trumpet calls ;
Where Gospel light is glowing
With pure and radiant beams,
And living water flowing
With soul-refreshing streams.

New graces ever gaining,
From this, our day of rest,
We reach the rest remaining
To spirits of the blest ;
To Holy Ghost be praises,
To Father and to Son ;

The Church her voice upraises
To Thee, blest Three in One.

Dr. Wordsworth.

ST. JOHN ix. 16.



HIS man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day."

And what, think ye, had "this man," the man Christ Jesus, done on that holy day, that the general charge of Sabbath-breaking should be preferred against Him, and His divine mission denied? Wherein had He failed to leave an example which we, in our measure, should sedulously strive to imitate, as we "daily endeavor ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life?"

It was in regard, indeed, of a single act then performed, the opening of the eyes of a man blind from his birth, that the charge was made; a miracle else unwrought since the world began, the creative act that gave sight for the first time to the wayside beggar, recorded in the introductory part of the chapter from which the text is taken.

But great and memorable as was this act, it was but a single one of many deeds; the words spoken by Him when effecting it were exceeding few in comparison of the multitude of His other words then uttered, the colloquies and discourses

with which he for ever distinguished the day ; apparently but a few moments of a completely occupied Sabbath were employed in giving sight to the man blind from his birth.

The history of no other Sabbath in our Lord's life would seem to be so amply detailed as this. Most probably all that we read in the eighth, ninth, and to the nineteenth verse of the tenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, took place on one and the same day. With that day are to be associated Christ's last *public*, and so important discourses and colloquies concerning His nature and office ; His cure of the blind man, His mild and merciful judgment of the adulteress, and undoubted remission of her sin ; His confounding of the hypocritical Pharisees, His eluding their attempted stoning of Him, and His presence, as a matter of course, once and again in the Temple. On the evening preceding this Sabbath He had withdrawn from the confusion and revelry of the city (the season was a festal one) to the privacy and sanctity of the Mount of Olives. Whether it was in regard of the coming day, as though He would Himself, in His own case, make some previous preparation for the meeter hallowing of the Sabbath ; or, as indicating that on our part there should be some such preparation, we can only conjecture. We

are told that "early in the morning He came again into the Temple." From the word employed, and from what subsequently follows, it is evident that the hour of His return was, indeed, a very early one. He did not come long after the assembling of the worshippers, when the priests were already engaged in offering sacrifice; when the smoke of the incense was ascending on every side; when the voice of supplication and prayer was heard; when trumpet, and psaltery, and harp, with psalms and hymns, were making melody unto the Lord; or during the reading and exposition of the Law and the Prophets. No! It was at the breaking of the day, or between that hour and sunrise, that He came again into the Temple; and surely his followers there might well seek to be as early as the hour appointed.

We next read that He employed the early morning hour in teaching the multitude. It was probably while thus engaged that the self-constituted court of Scribes and Pharisees brought to Him the woman taken in adultery. It was in the Sanctuary, and on the Sabbath, that the mild and merciful Jesus spake peace and pardon, even to such a sinner. Surely we shall be following the Saviour's example, if we aim to hallow this day by a judgment of the amplest charity in re-

gard of all men. His subsequent colloquy with the Pharisees was broken up by their attempt to stone Him, as He affirmed His unbeginning existence ere yet Abraham was born. Escaping miraculously their intended violence, the next scene in which the Saviour appears is that of His giving sight to the blind man, whom, at the close of the day, and probably in the Temple, He meets, and whose imperfect faith He rewards by revealing Himself to him as the Son of God. With the discourse commencing at the thirty-ninth verse of the ninth chapter, and ending with the eighteenth verse of the tenth chapter of St. John, our Lord, as it would appear, closed this memorable day. As if indeed to render it "a day of rest and gladness," did our gracious Lord also associate Himself with it, in declaring Himself the true and ever-open door of the Heavenly fold; the only Shepherd who in the cloudy and dark day could gather to Himself the diseased and the broken, the lost and the driven away.

But it is most noticeable and suggestive that subsequently the theme of the same discourse is renewed; that what was done, and begun, and said on this day, was not then brought to a full and final conclusion. Reverently, and for our own sake be it said, that our Lord's Sabbaths were not days of isolation, days that stood in entire

disassociation with all other days. No ; the discourse then begun was not then altogether ended ; the work then commenced was not then, as a matter of course, completed. With these days all other days were bound as in indissoluble links. And should it be otherwise with us ? On this day should we not gather heavenly manna for all the week ? Should our Sundays be days of entire isolation, days whose seed and flower fail to fructify through all the week ? Surely of our Sundays it may well be said :

“Nothing that altogether dies
Suffices man’s just destinies ;
So should we live that every hour
May die as dies the natural flower,
A self-reviving thing of power ;
That every thought and every deed,
May hold within itself the seed
Of future good and future meed.”

From this imperfect sketch of one of our Lord’s Sabbaths, there is surely something for each one to gather for his good ; whether it be in regard of previous preparation, or early and diligent use of the day, or charitable judgment, or employment of every possible means of grace, or the act of beneficence, or contemplation of Christ in His more glorious and cheering aspects,

or in the purpose and endeavor that the day be indeed but the *first* day of the week, the day whose influence is surely to pervade and sanctify the entire six that follow.

Let us but endeavor in some one, or in all of these respects, to make our Lord and Master our example; then will indeed our Sundays become—

“Bright shadows of true rest! Some shoots of blisse;
Heaven once a week:
The next world’s gladness prepossest in this:
A day to seek
Eternity in time: the steps by which
We climb above all ages; Lamps that light
Man through his heape of dark dayes; and the rich
And full redemption of the whole week’s flight.
The milky way chalked out with suns, a clue
That guides through erring hours, and in full story
A taste of heaven on earth; the pledge and cue
Of a full feast; and the outcourts of glory.”

Rev G. H. Houghton.

Fifth Monday.

Quietness and Confidence.

There is a safe and secret place
Beneath the wings divine,
Reserved for all the heirs of grace ;
Oh, be that refuge mine !

The least and feeblest there may bide,
Uninjured and unawed ;
While thousands fall on every side,
He rests secure in God.

The angels watch him on his way,
And aid with friendly arm ;
And Satan, roaring for his prey,
May hate, but cannot harm.

He feeds in pastures large and fair,
Of love and truth divine ;
O child of God, O glory's heir,
How rich a lot is thine !

A hand Almighty to defend,
An ear for every call,
An honored life, a peaceful end,
And Heaven to crown it all.

Henry Francis Lyte.



UT it is necessary for me to speak to you a little, heart to heart, and to tell you that whoever has a true desire of serving our Lord, and of flying from sin, ought in nowise to torture himself with the fear of death, or of the Divine judgments. For although both the one and the other are indeed to be feared, still the fear ought not to be mere physical alarm, crushing the vigor of our minds; on the contrary, it ought to be so mingled with confidence in the goodness of God, as to become sweet in consequence of it.

And we ought not to begin to doubt whether we are in a position to confide in God, when we feel difficulty in keeping ourselves from sin, or have mistrust and fear, lest in particular occasions and temptations we shall be unable to resist it. Oh, no! for mistrust of our own strength is not a deficiency of resolution, but a true acknowledgment of our misery. It is a better feeling to mistrust our own power of resisting temptations than to assume a confident attitude, pro-

vided always that what we do not expect from our own strength we do expect from the grace of God. For it has frequently happened that persons who, in the midst of consolation, promised themselves that they would do marvels for God, have failed when put to the trial ; and others again, who greatly mistrusted their own strength, and feared much that they would fail when put to the proof, have, on a sudden, effected marvels, because that deep feeling of their own weakness drove them to seek aid and succor from God, to watch, to pray, to humiliate themselves, that they might not enter into temptation.

I further say, that we ought in nowise to be distressed at not feeling within us force or courage to resist temptation, in the supposition of its occurrence at this moment, if only we desire to resist it, hoping that, if it did come, God would help us, and praying of Him to grant us His help. For there is no need for us always to have the sensation of strength and courage ; it is enough for us to hope and desire that we shall have it at the right time and place ; nor is there any need for us to feel within ourselves any sign or mark that we shall have that courage ; it is sufficient for us to hope that God will aid us.

Samson, who was called the strong man, never felt the supernatural strength with which God

assisted him, except on occasions for it ; and on that account it is said, when encountering lions or his enemies, that the Spirit of God came upon him.

God, who does nothing in vain, does not give you either strength or courage when there is no occasion for it, but only when there is occasion ; and so we must always hope that on all occasions He will aid us, provided only that we cry unto Him. We should constantly use those words of David : “ *Why art thou sad, O my soul ? and why dost thou disquiet me ? Hope in God.* ” And again : “ *When my strength shall fail, do not Thou forsake me.* ”

Well, then, since you desire to depend entirely on God, why do you fear your weakness, on which it is very true that you ought to place no kind of reliance ? Do you not hope in God ? and shall he that hopeth in Him ever be confounded ? No, he never shall be.

I entreat you to pacify all the objections which may possibly arise in your mind. There is no occasion to make any other answer to them, except that you desire to be faithful on all occasions ; and that you hope God will enable you to be so, without attempting to find out whether that will be the case or not ; for, such attempts are very liable to deceive you. Many are valiant

when they do not see the enemy, who are not so when he appears ; whilst, on the contrary, many are fearful beforehand, to whom the very presence of the danger gives courage. You must not fear being afraid.

St. Francis de Sales.

Fifth Tuesday.

The Soul.

Whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
 This longing after immortality?
 Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,
 Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
 Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
 'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
 'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
 And intimates eternity to man.

Addison.



AN, although not yet lord of the visible universe as an adult, is lord of it as an heir, and exercises an authority becoming the minority of one for whom vast possessions are in reserve. This is not the language of

empty pretension ; modern science and art make good, in detail, all that is here affirmed at large.

But, as we go deeper and deeper into the recesses of our nature, and duly consider the dignity and the powers of the moral life, and the vast compass of the affections, we shall feel, in far greater force, the truth—a truth of unbounded import, that the most excellent forms of matter are as nothing in comparison with the worth and destinies of the spirit. The affections of the spirit, and their power of intimate communion with the Infinite spirit, not only raise the mind immeasurably above the level of the visible world, and carry it clear of the fate of that world, but raise it even above the range of the merely intellectual faculties, so that a state may be conceived of far better and higher than that of the highest exercise of reason.

In truth, what is it that leads us to attach the value we do attach to intellectual labor and achievement ? Not the mere practical result of those engagements ; not the mere labor, in itself considered ; but the *emotion*, the sentiment, the moral power, connected with it, and by which it is prompted, animated, and rewarded. Within the entire circle of our intellectual constitution we value nothing but emotion ; it is not the powers, or the exercise of the powers, but the

fruit of those powers, in so much *feeling*, of a lofty kind, as they will yield. Now, that towards which we are constantly tending, as our goal—that which we rest in when it is attained as sufficient—is that which shall be ultimate, and shall survive whatever has been mediate, or contributory, or accessary. Everything short of the affections of the soul is a means to an end, and must have its season ; it is temporary ; but the affections of the soul are the end of all, and they are eternal. Let the universe perish, or be changed, the soul shall live.

Taylor.

It is certain man hath a soul, and as certain that it is immortal. But what and how it is, in the perfect nature and substance of it, I confess my human reason could never so inform me, as I could fully explain it to my own apprehension. O my God ! what a clod of moving ignorance is man ! When all his industry cannot instruct him what himself is ; when he knows not that whereby he knows that he does not know it. Let him study, and think, and invent, and search the very inwards of obscured nature, he is yet to seek how to define this inexplicable, immortal, incorporeal wonder, this ray of Thee, this emana-

tion of Thy deity. Let it, then, be sufficient that God hath given me a soul, and that my eternal welfare depends upon it, though He be not accountable either how I had it, or what it is. I think both Seneca and Cicero say truest, when they are of opinion that man cannot know what the soul is. Nor, indeed, need any man wonder at it; since he may know whatsoever is created by a superior power suffers a composure, but cannot know it, because it was done before itself was. Man, though he hath materials, cannot make anything that can either know how it was made, or what it is, being made; yet it is without defect, in respect of the end it is intended for. How then can man think to know himself, when both his materials and composure are both created and formed by a Supreme Power that did it without co-operation? Why should I strive to know that which I know I cannot know? Can a man dissect an atom? can he grasp a flame? or hold and seize on lightnings? I am sure I have a soul, and am commanded to keep it from sin. O Thou, the God of that little god within me—my soul! let me do that, and I know Thou art not such an enemy to ignorance in man, but that Thou art better pleased with his admiration of Thy secrets, than his search of them.

Felltham.

Sixth Wednesday.

One Flock and one Shepherd.

Souls of men ! why will ye scatter
Like a crowd of frightened sheep ?
Foolish hearts ! why will ye wander
From a love so true and deep ?

Was there ever kindest shepherd—
Half so gentle, half so sweet
As the Saviour who would have us,
Come and gather round His feet ?

It is God : His love looks mighty,
But is mightier than it seems ;
'Tis our Father : and His fondness
Goes far out beyond our dreams.

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea ;
There's a kindness in His justice,
Which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth's sorrows
Are more felt than up in heaven ;
There is no place where earth's failings
Have such kindly judgment given.

There is welcome for the sinner,
And more graces for the good !
There is mercy with the Saviour ;
There is healing in His blood.

There is grace enough for thousands
Of new worlds as great as this ;
There is room for fresh creations
In that upper home of bliss.

For the love of God is broader
Than the measures of man's mind :
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

But we make His love too narrow
By false limits of our own ;
And we magnify His strictness
With a zeal He will not own.

There is plentiful redemption
In the blood that has been shed ;
There is joy for all the members
In the sorrows of the Head.

'Tis not all we owe to Jesus ;
It is something more than all ;
Greater good because of evil,
Larger mercy through the fall.

Pining souls ! come nearer Jesus,
 And oh come not doubting thus,
 But with faith that trusts more bravely,
 His huge tenderness for us.

If our love were but more simple,
 We should take Him at His word ;
 And our lives would be all sunshine
 In the sweetness of our Lord.

Faber.



AND other sheep I have ; have already, in fore-knowledge and purpose ; which are not of this fold, this nation of Israel, to which the ministry of Christ, while Himself upon earth, was to be limited.

Them, also, must I bring : must, because so it is written of me ; must, because My love, even as that of the Father who sent Me, is not bounded by local or national restrictions ; must, because God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Them, also, must I bring : I ; for, if I do not, none else can : the work of saving one soul, as well as that of gathering together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad, is beyond the power of any human messenger, and, except I work, from heaven, in the hearts of them that hear, no one man

to the very end of time can be turned from darkness to light. *Them, also, must I bring; bring:* leading, not driving them; drawing them gently forward, by the persuasion of my Spirit within, out of the vast wilderness of sin and self into the green pastures and beside the still waters, out of the wretchedness of a life of cares and vanities into the joy and peace which belong to my redeemed.

And they shall hear My voice. They shall recognise, one after another, in distant lands, in successive generations, the voice which addresses them as they are, and which offers them what they want; the voice which speaks the universal language, touches the universal wound, and heals the universal woe; the voice which, whosoever hears within, finds himself at once calmed, emancipated, and illuminated; the voice which, whosoever patiently follows, will find himself led onward from strength to strength by a wisdom not his own into a happiness of which he dreamed not.

And there shall be one flock, one Shepherd. *One flock*, consisting of all those who accept Christ as their Saviour, under *one Shepherd*, that Saviour who casts out none that come to Him.

My brethren, no passages of Scripture ought to be more attractive to us than those which, like this, show that our Lord Himself had from

the very first our particular case in view. It was no after-thought—still less was it an accident—but a plan arranged by Him, and declared from the beginning, which brought the Gentiles, which brought us of this land and age, into the flock and fold of Christ. Of us He thought when He was upon earth; for us He has made provision from His throne in heaven: in our behalf He sent forth that great company of the preachers, spoken of in the language of prophecy, which has been ever since gathering new generations and new races into the gospel fold: in our behalf He Himself uttered that memorable prayer in the same night in which He was betrayed: *Neither pray I for these, My first disciples, alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.*

One flock, one Shepherd. Yes, such was Christ's will and Christ's promise. *That they also may be one in Us.* Yes, such was Christ's prayer and Christ's ordinance. Has it been fulfilled? Is it in course of fulfilment? Yes; that also we doubt not. But to look on, from the level of earth and of things present, upon the community of His professed people, we might well ask, where

is the sign of unity? Where is the one flock? where is the one Shepherd? where is the saying, *That they all may be one?* It is sad to see divisions where there ought to be peace; men believing in one Saviour, seeking one rest and one home, and yet all differing about the means by which that end is to be won! Let us be careful not to add to such divisions. Let us be resolute to see Christ's people in all who own Him as their Saviour. Let us never doubt that there may be a unity of spirit in diversity of form, even as there certainly may be a diversity of spirit in unity of form. *They shall hear My voice.* Let that be for ourselves; let that be (so far as it is necessary) for others our test of unity. Are we, are they, listening to Christ's voice, and living, day by day, as He taught, as He teaches? Are we, are they, fearing God, and working righteousness? Are we, are they, doing all that can be done to set forward holiness and godliness on this sinful earth? Are we, are they, acknowledging Christ's Word as the rule of faith, and Christ's example as the rule of practice? Then are we already one in Him. Then we may be quite sure that, whatever differences of form may seem to divide us, these belong rather to the circumstances amidst which, than to the spirit in which, we are living here below. *If in*

anything we be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Many things which now appear to us to be almost or quite essential to Christianity may hereafter perhaps fall off from us as we pass through the dark river, or through the golden gates beyond. Let us all *hold the head*, derive every day our own strength and grace from Him, and, be well assured, we shall find ourselves at last, much, it may be, to our surprise, to have been *all one in Christ Jesus*.

Vaughan.

Sixth Thursday.

Humble Walking.

Oh, how the thought of God attracts
And draws the heart from earth,
And sickens it of passing shows
And dissipating mirth !

'Tis not enough to save our souls,
To shun the eternal fires ;
The thought of God will rouse the heart
To more sublime desires.

God only is the creature's home,
Though rough and strait the road ;
Yet nothing less can satisfy
The love that longs for God.

Oh, utter but the name of God
Down in your heart of hearts,
And see how from the world at once
All tempting light departs.

A trusting heart, a yearning eye,
Can win their way above ;
If mountains can be moved by faith,
Is there less power in love ?

How little of that road, my soul !
How little hast thou gone !
Take heart, and let the thought of God
Allure thee further on.

The freedom from all wilful sin,
The Christian's daily task,—
Oh, these are graces far below
What longing love would ask.

Dole not thy duties out to God,
But let thy hand be free ;
Look long at Jesus ; His sweet blood,
How was it dealt to thee ?

The perfect way is hard to flesh ;
It is not hard to lose ;
If thou wert sick for want of God,
How swiftly wouldst thou move.

Good is the cloister's silent shade,
Cold watch and pining fast ;
Better the mission's wearing strife,
If there thy lot be cast.

Yet none of these perfection needs :—
Keep thy heart calm all day,
And catch the words the Spirit there
From hour to hour may say.

Then keep thy conscience sensitive ;
No inward token miss :
And go where grace entices thee ;
Perfection lies in this.

Be docile to thine unseen Guide,
Love Him as He loves thee ;
Time and obedience are enough,
And thou a saint shalt be.

Faber.



WE may very rightly make simple wishes, which witness to our gratitude. I may say, alas ! why am I not as fervent as the seraphim, the better to serve and love my God ? But I must not amuse myself with forming desires, as if in this world I was to attain to that exquisite perfection ; or say, I desire this ; I will set myself to attain it, and if I fail of reaching it, I shall be unhappy. I do not say that we ought not to put ourselves in the path of such perfections, only we must not desire to reach it in one day ; that is to say, in one day of this mortal life ; for this desire would be a torment to us, and a most useless one.

It is necessary, in order to travel well, for us to attend to the accomplishment of that part of the journey which is immediately before us, to

get over the first day's ground, and not to amuse ourselves with desiring to accomplish the last day's journey when our business is to make an end of the first. I will express it in one word, which I beg you to bear in mind : we sometimes amuse ourselves with the idea of being good angels when we are not laboring to make ourselves even good men.

Our imperfections must accompany us to the grave. We cannot walk without touching the earth. We ought not to lie and welter there ; but we also ought not to think of flying ; we are, as yet, unfledged. We die little by little ; we must, therefore, make our imperfections die with us day by day. Dear imperfections ! which make us recognise our misery, exercise us in humility, in contempt of ourselves, in patience and diligence, and in spite of which God considers that preparation of our heart which is perfect.

Earth as we are, let us walk on earth, since the deep sea turns our head and makes us reel. Let us remain at our Lord's feet with Mary ; let us practise those little virtues which are adapted to our littleness ; and there are virtues that are exercised rather in descending than in ascending, the better for our weakness. Such are patience, the bearing with our neighbor, and doing him service, humility, sweetness, courage, affability,

the endurance of our imperfections, and other little virtues like them.

I do not say that we are not to ascend by means of prayer ; but it must be step by step. I recommend to you holy simplicity. Look close before you, and do not look at those dangers which you see afar off. You fancy they are armies ; they are only trees in the distance, and while you are gazing at them you may make some false steps.

Let us have a form and general purpose of intending to serve God with all our heart and all our life ; and this done, let us not think of the morrow. Let us only think of achieving the present day well ; and when to-morrow shall have arrived, it too will be called to-day, and then we shall think of it. Besides this, it is necessary that we have a great confidence in the providence of God, and a resignation to it. We must make provision of manna for each day, and no more ; and let us have no doubts ; God will rain manna to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow, and all the days of our pilgrimage.

St. Francis de Sales.

From experience I have learned that nothing is so effectual for the reception of grace, for its

preservation, and for its restoration, as to walk humbly before God, to be not high-minded, and continually to distrust ourselves. Fear thyself if grace look lovingly upon thee ; fear thyself if it depart ; fear thyself if it yet again return. When it is with thee, tremble lest thou drive it from thee ; should it leave thee, tremble yet more, lest, deprived of its merciful aid, thou thyself shouldst fall ; this may too quickly befall thee, for thy protection has forsaken thee. And doubt not that thy pride is the cause, even though it were not apparent—even though thou wert all unconscious. For what thou knowest not, God knoweth. Shall He who giveth grace to the humble, take it from the humble ? Therefore the withdrawal of grace proves thy pride. If it be restored thee, must thou yet more fear lest thou again fall. Therefore fear God at all times, and with thy whole heart ; God desires a free gift, the whole will, a perfect sacrifice. Thou canst not at the same time fear thyself, and yet entertain lofty thoughts of thine own excellences. For when thou forsakest pride, then only knowest thou the fear of the Lord, and only he that fears himself can taste the joy of love.

Bernard.

The righteous is as a tree planted by the water-side. Where flow streams? Through the low lands and valleys. Choose then a valley for thy pilgrimage, a valley for thy plantation. On the mountain it is stern and rugged ; on the mountain the old serpent hath his habitation. In the valley it is fresh and fertile ; there the trees thrive, there sprouts the full ear, there the reaping is a hundredfold. In the vale of humility God outpours the riches of His grace ; therefore remain firmly rooted and established in it.

Bernard.

Give me the lowest place ; not that I dare
Ask for that lowest place, but Thou hast died
That I might live and share
Thy glory by Thy side.

Give me the lowest place : or if for me
That lowest place too high, make one more low
Where I may sit and see
My God and love Thee so.

Christina Rossetti.

Sixth Friday.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

Thou who, for forty days and nights, o'ermastered all
the might

Of Satan, and the fiercest pangs of famished appetite—
O Saviour ! leave us not alone to wrestle with our sin,
But aid us in these holy hours of solemn discipline.

Let not the tempter tempt us, Lord, beyond our strength
to bear,

Though, in the desert of our woe, he wildly shrieks,
Despair !

Let not our humble confidence be in Thy promise stirred,
Nor clouds of dark distrust spring up between us and Thy
word.

Nor let us yet be lifted up—by him, the prince of air,
To scale presumption's dizzy height, and left to perish
there ;

Nor on the temple's pinnacle, in our self-righteous pride,
Be set for Thee to frown upon, and demons to deride.

And oh, when pleasure, power, and pomp around our
vision swim,
And, through the soft, enchanting mist, he bids us worship
him,
Assist us from the revelling sense the sorcerer's spell to
break,
And tread the arch-apostate down, Redeemer, for Thy
sake.

Croswell.



HIS is the victory that overcometh
the world, even our faith."

What is the representation here
made of our position? We have
an enemy. That is plainly said.
Every one of us, who has any of the hopes or
aims of a Christian, has an enemy, whose
existence, whose ceaseless activity, may well
trouble and alarm him. We cannot escape
from him. It is a foe of our own household.
It is a foe with whom we are compelled to asso-
ciate every day. The world; the things that
are seen; the present state; the life that is, with
all its cares, its interests, its pleasures—this is
our enemy. We do not speak in a fantastic,
unreal, or exaggerated sense; we are not coun-
selling a morbid fear of things which God has
created for our use and for our enjoyment, as
though a serpent lurked in each, and made its

very touch deadly. But we do know, every one of us, that, taking the present state as a whole, the world in the aggregate of its influences upon us, is not a friend to our highest good ; if our highest good be that which God seems to represent it to be in His word of revelation. Let yourself alone but for one day ; surrender yourself but for one day to the guidance, to the operation upon you, of your world, less or greater ; move about in it, listen and talk, work and enjoy in it for one day, without any counteracting and countervailing power consciously looked and appealed to within, and where would you be at the end of that day ? Should you be nearer to, or further from, the goal of life, if that goal be a heavenly one, if that goal be the love of God, the attainment of a Divine rest, a spiritual happiness, and an eternal home ?

It is thus that we must test the world, and not by any lower or more arbitrary standard. If this strange complicated thing which we call our being, ourselves, is ever to know unity, repose, complete satisfaction, all its parts having attained their object, and consciously resting in their perfect joy ; if this is the hope which Christ came to inspire in all who will have Him for their Saviour ; then that must be our enemy which tends to distract and to unsettle us, to turn off

our attention from the aim of life, and to bid us find or seek repose in this thing or that thing, which is either doubtful of attainment, inferior in nature, limited in extent, or brief in duration.

The world is our enemy, on the supposition that we have any aim or any hope beyond it. Not otherwise. The world is our friend if all we have ever to look for is bounded by the life that is. If we do not believe in Christ, if we do not desire to be with Him, if we do not wish above all things, so to live that that hope of being with Him hereafter may not be interfered with, then we cannot do better than get all that this world has to offer us, make peace with it, adopt its principles, claim its friendship, sue for its rewards: else shall we be losing both worlds—the world that is, and also the world that shall be.

But this is not so, avowedly, with any of us: God grant it be not so really. We do wish, every one of us, to get safe to heaven. If by any one great sacrifice or great exertion we could secure this, I do not believe that there is one person in this congregation who would refuse or hesitate to make it. I scarcely believe there is one here present who would not willingly lay down even this precious life that is, for the certainty of a sure and instant entrance into a world of safety and of immortality. But it is not thus

that our warfare has to be waged. Rather is it by a protracted, a wearisome, often a desultory process, that we must make our way : by wakefulness, by discernment, by discretion, by being always ready, by being patient of delay and disappointment, by a willingness oftentimes only to stand and wait, by experience dearly purchased, by rising sadder and wiser from painful falls, by making an onward step when we can, but more often by hardly refraining from a backward one, by being ever prepared to find real foes in fancied friends, or to see the mountain side, which seemed but now emptied and untenanted, bristling on the sudden with armed enemies ; it is thus that the Christian conflict is waged ; and many a man who could have nerved himself for one brief decisive struggle, however sharp or unequal, fails, faints, and at last deserts, amidst the ceaseless and less heroic exertions by which he must fight his way into the kingdom of God in heaven.

The world : that is our foe. Sometimes the world is made but one of three foes—the flesh and the devil being added to it. But, like each of these also—like the flesh, like the devil—it is sometimes made to embrace all that opposes the Christian warrior. It is the flesh which gives entrance to all ; it is the devil who directs and uses

all; but the world furnishes the material of all. The world contains everything that can either tempt or harass : and the victory of the Christian, like the victory of Christ Himself, is then completed when he can say, without enumerating aught else, *I have overcome the world.*

Charles John Vaughan, D.D.

“**Man** shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

You are entreated to take notice that this reply of the great Captain of our Salvation hath been bequeathed to *us*, His feeble and most faithless soldiers, as a precious legacy, as well as a most glorious pattern and example. Against Carnal Appetite, against the Lust of the Flesh, did Satan address his first temptation when he assailed our Lord; and we may be well assured that he assailed the Holy One in that quarter because he knew it to be the quarter in which human nature is most vulnerable. It is a fearful thought for us all; but it is a truth against which we close our eyes at our peril. Nine out of ten are most open to assaults of a fleshly nature.

Here and there, worldly ambition,—here and there, spiritual presumption,—is the snare which beguiles a man and works his ruin : but it is far oftener gluttony or drunkenness, sloth or lust, which gives the Enemy an advantage over him, and in the end causes him to be dragged down to the very edge of the pit. Now, as already pointed out, the great Captain of our Salvation hath left us a weapon wherewith to repel such assaults, in the words of the text,—whereby He beat away the Tempter, disarmed him, and gave him a death-blow. On our lips (God be praised for it !) those words have exactly the same force which they had on *His*. They imply that man hath a soul as well as a body ; that the life of the body does indeed depend on its union to the soul, but the life of the *soul* depends on its union with God : that bread is indeed the support of man's lower nature, yet not of his higher ; as it is written, "Man shall not live by bread *alone*." The spiritual meat is to do the will of God. And while man continues to be such as he is, so long will it be the true answer to all fleshly solicitations, solemnly to profess that a man's life consisteth not in the things which he possesseth ; that he has loftier needs than aught on earth can supply ; that his meat is to do God's will ; that his life is to lean upon God ; for that in

Him, and through Him, and by Him, he lives, and moves, and hath his very being.

Burgon.

“**F**or the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things.”

The world hopes to win us by flattery, the Devil attacks us with sharpness and ingenuity, but the flesh seeks to wear us out. It is always at its work, pressing down the soul, taming the ecstasy of devotion, putting a clog upon the will, crossing, and checking, and thwarting good desires. It is our keeper, and we are chained to it while we are in this prison-house of clay; night and day, sleeping and waking. What would it be to be free from it! We cannot remember a moment of our lives in which we have not felt the burden of our body; none in which we have not had something that would be either pain or discomfort in Heaven. Of itself, this freedom would almost make Heaven. Possibly it is *the* joy of Paradise, the negative bliss of that tranquil state in which the soul waits for those without whom it cannot be made perfect. Just to be free; to be a soul and to love; to be a mind and to think; to be safe and at rest, rid of our

keeper and beyond our foes ; this is to be in Paradise.

“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

Eph. vi., 11—12.

* * * * * The armor with which they were called upon to clothe themselves was in order to their protection against the injurious attempts of the Devil. It was invisible, yet no less real ; and in like manner the enemy with whom they were to contend was equally invisible, and equally real. He is spoken of as an existing person, and a person of whose existence, as of his devices, they were not ignorant. The object of the Apostle is not to show us that there is a Devil, or that he is able to make war against us, but, starting from that point, to show how only we can resist him—not by our own strength, but by the power of the Lord in the use of those means of defence which He has given us.

And this manner of speaking of the Devil is worthy of our notice, because it is so plain a

recognition of his personality and his power. For, some men there have been and are who are so bold as to deny this ; although their denial is for us, indeed, somewhat shorn of its strength, as we reflect that they are of the number of those who do not, also, fear to deny the Lord that bought them. But those who will search the Scriptures for their information of that world which lies above, beneath, and around us, and who will be content to hold as a matter of faith what the limit of the human mind will never permit them to grasp as a matter of knowledge, will learn that there is no clearer, no more certain revelation of a God than there is of a Devil.

More fully and more minutely is the being of God unfolded, but not more surely. And we need not be surprised to find that those who suffer themselves to doubt of the one, do after a time doubt of the other also. For if we have the same authority for both, and one be found not true, then have we no authority that we can trust for the other ; and if we receive not the God of the Scriptures, but seek one amid the obscure teachings of a corrupted nature, we may rest assured that, whatever we find, it will not be the God in Christ. Though we should think we found no necessity for redemption, yet the certainty would be that we found no redemption—

though we should rid ourselves of the fear of Hell, we could cherish no hope of Heaven. And what is God without Christ, but power without love? which is the very character the Bible gives to Satan.

Rev. Wm. F. Seabury.

Sixth Saturday.

Charity.

① God ! whose thoughts are brightest light,
Whose love runs always clear,
To whose kind wisdom sinning souls
Amidst their sins are dear !

Sweeten my bitter-thoughted heart
With charity like Thine,
Till self shall be the only spot
On earth which does not shine.

Hard-heartedness dwells not with souls
Round whom Thine arms are drawn ;
And dark thoughts fade away in grace,
Like cloud-spots in the dawn.

I often see in my own thoughts,
When they lie nearest Thee,
That the worst men I ever knew
Were better men than me.

And of all truths, no other truth
So true as this one seems ;
While others' faults, that plainest were,
Grow indistinct as dreams.

All men look good except ourselves,
All but ourselves are great ;
The rays that make our sins so clear,
Their faults obliterate.

Things that appeared undoubted sins,
Wear little crowns of light ;
Their dark, remaining darkness still,
Shames and outshines our bright.

Time was when I believed that wrong
In others to detect,
Was part of genius, and a gift
To cherish, not reject.

Now better taught by Thee, O Lord !
This truth dawns on my mind,—
The best effect of heavenly light
Is earth's false eyes to blind.

Thou art the Unapproached, whose height
Enables Thee to stoop,
Whose holiness bends undefiled,
To handle hearts that droop.

He, whom no praise can reach, is aye
Men's least attempts approving ;

Whom justice makes all-merciful,
Omniscience makes all-loving.

How Thou canst think so well of us,
Yet be the God Thou art,
Is darkness to my intellect,
But sunshine to my heart.

Yet habits linger in the soul ;
More grace, O Lord, more grace !
More sweetness from Thy loving Heart,
More sunshine from Thy Face.

When we ourselves least kindly are,
We deem the world unkind ;
Dark hearts, in flowers where honey lies,
Only the poison find.

We paint from self the evil things
We think that others are ;
While to the self-despising soul
All things but self are fair.

Yes, they have caught the way of God,
To whom self lies displayed
In such clear vision as to cast
O'er others' faults a shade.

A bright horizon out at sea
Obscures the distant ships ;
Rough hearts look smooth and beautiful
In charity's eclipse.

Love's changeful mood our neighbor's faults
O'erwhelms with burning ray,
And in excess of splendor hides
What is not burned away.

Again, with truth like God's, it shades
Harsh things with untrue light,
Like moons that make a fairy-land
Of fallow fields at night.

Then mercy, Lord ! more mercy still !
Make me all light within,
Self-hating and compassionate,
And blind to others' sin.

I need Thy mercy for my sin ;
But more than this I need,—
Thy mercy's likeness in my soul,
For others' sin to bleed.

'Tis not enough to weep my sins ;
'Tis but one step to Heaven ;
When I am kind to others, then
I know myself forgiven.

Would that my soul might be a world
Of golden ether bright,
A heaven where other souls might float,
Like all Thy worlds, in light.

All bitterness is from ourselves,
All sweetness is from Thee ;

Sweet God ! for evermore be Thou
Fountain and fire in me !

Faber.



WHEN it is considered that charity is declared to be the greatest of virtues—greater even than faith itself, no one who is at all desirous of pleasing God, and anxious for his own safety, can afford to overlook so very solemn and important a lesson. Let us therefore attend to this matter with some care.

And, first, we cannot help being struck by the very lofty place which the Apostle assigns to charity. If any one were to come among us, and speak so eloquently that all paused to listen, while all who listened were enchanted ; if the charm of his eloquence were such that tears flowed when he spoke, and men went away from his presence persuaded of the things he taught, we might be apt to think such a one a great favorite of heaven, as well as a chosen instrument in God's hands. St. Paul, however, speaking by the spirit of God, expressly informs us that we might be mistaken in so doing. If this attractive speaker had not charity, he would be nothing ! But we should yet be more certainly entrapped into a belief that we beheld a great and holy person, signally beloved of God, and destined

to occupy a high place in heaven, if the person we have been already describing had the gift of prophecy, and understood all the mysteries of religion. The treasures of divine wisdom, we are apt to think, cannot abide with any but the very good. We learn from God Himself, however, that they may exist where there is no charity; and moreover, that if they *do* exist in one who has not charity, that man is *nothing*.

A far severer trial would await us if we saw this person give proof of a most living faith. What would be thought of one who could say unto this mountain, "Remove hence to yonder place," and straightway it should be seen to obey the command of the speaker, and roll from its everlasting seat? We should surely regard him as something more than human. We should certainly be bold to assume that he carried the seal of the Eternal God on his forehead. And yet, the witness of the Spirit is express that this worker of miracles, if he were without charity, would be as *nothing* in God's sight.

The crowning wonder yet remains. Watch this same speaker with the tongue of angels—this same mighty prophet and deep divine, this same worker of miracles, who is possessed of all faith—watch him as he retires from the scene of his preaching, of his display of sacred wisdom,

of his acts of miraculous power, and behold him calmly making a sacrifice of all his earthly possessions, in order to benefit the poor, to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry. He is now himself a beggar. He has parted with all his goods ; and the objects of his bounty were the poor of the flock—the Good Shepherd's little ones. You *must* feel that this sight would completely silence suspicion and overcome doubt. We should be tempted, every one of us, to exclaim—" This man is a real saint !"

However, the plain *fact* is, that if I do all these things, and have not charity, it profiteth me *nothing* ! This may appear strange, but the strangeness of the matter signifies nothing. It is true. There may be the gift of tongues without the gift of charity ; the gift of prophecy, the understanding of all mysteries, and the possession of all knowledge, and yet no charity. Faith that can move mountains, yet no charity. Almsgiving (which is sometimes improperly called charity), and yet charity itself may be wanting. And (which it concerns us most of all to notice), if *it be* wanting, then all the other wondrous gifts and graces are nothing worth. A more striking revelation concerning ourselves is perhaps hardly to be found in any page of Scripture.

What, then, is the nature of the gift concerning which such lofty things are told us? Verily, when we come to examine, our wonder increases. We expected something very magnificent, and everything we hear is something exceedingly lowly. We expected a proud flower, and we find nothing but a fragrant herb which creeps very near the ground. Let us go over St. Paul's description of charity, feature by feature.

First, then, "Charity suffereth long and is kind." Observe, therefore, that charity does not do anything great: nay, it does not *do* anything at all. It *suffers*. Next, we learn that it is without envy. "Charity envieth not." It follows that it "vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own." We may pause to point out that we are in the midst of a string of negatives, each of which demolishes, at a blow, a whole class of actions which disfigure the character. The boastful, the proud, the unseemly, the self-seeking—all of these here meet with their reproof, and are reminded that charity dwells with none of themselves. Charity, once more, "is not easily provoked;" and this is a feature of charity which reminds us painfully how rarely charity is met with in daily life; where, instead of unwillingness to take offence, we rather find people in-

venting causes of provocation where no offence was intended. Again, "she thinketh no evil." Oh, divine charity, which "thinketh no evil," even though she dwells in the midst of a wicked world! It is because she rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. If we loved better whatever things are pure, and lovely, and of good report, if iniquity were a burden to our spirits and a grief to our hearts, then, doubtless, we should be less prone to suspect its existence around us. Nay we should "think *no* evil" where evil was not proved to be.

Charity, lastly, "beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things." And this lovely grace exhausts itself in no sudden act; but it becomes an abiding habit of the soul: "Charity never faileth." Take notice, then, that *endurance* is again and again noted as its special work: nay, faith and hope themselves are but two of its functions; and they are the only *acts* of charity which St. Paul here enumerates at all.

This shall suffice on the subject of charity or love. The few words which have been offered should set us on a curious and somewhat anxious review of our own conduct. And truly he must be a very holy person indeed who can examine the Apostle's picture, and not feel how very

slender a likeness it presents of himself. Very certain are we that this page in the duty of a Christian man can never be too attentively studied ; and that it is not by any means studied enough. The talk of what is called "society" is not the talk of charity. The ways of the world are not charitable ways. Public intercourse and private friendship are sadly marred by the absence of charity. Charity is sometimes a stranger even in domestic circles ; and the happiness of a whole household becomes embittered for years, it may be for ever. Why is this ? How does it happen that what God hath so admirably contrived for the happiness and well-being of His creatures, should become converted into a grief and vexation to them, as well as into an offence to Himself ? It is because there is so little long-suffering in the world—so little forbearance and kindness ; so much envying ; so many vaunting words and puffed-up ways ; so much unseemly behavior ; so much self-seeking. It is because men and women are so very easily provoked, and are so prone to think all evil of one another. It is because there is so little inclination to cover faults ; so much unbelief ; so little hope. It is because there is so small a measure of meek endurance amongst mankind.

Burton.

“**Vous** qui pleurez, venez à ce Dieu, car il pleure.
Vous qui souffrez, venez à lui, car il guérit.
Vous qui tremblez, venez à lui, car il sourit.
Vous qui passez, venez à lui, car il demeure.”

VICTOR HUGO,
Ecrit au bas d'un Crucifix.

Palm Sunday.



AND when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, "Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her ; loose them and bring them unto Me.

"And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, 'The Lord hath need of them ;' and straightway he will send them."

All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass."

And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set Him thereon.

And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way ; others cut down branches from the trees, and strowed them in the way.

And the multitudes that went before and that followed, cried, saying, " Hosanna to the Son of David : Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord ; Hosanna in the highest."

Palm Sunday.

Jesus Wept.

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
Hark ! all the tribes Hosanna cry !
Thine humble beast pursues his road,
With palms and scattered garments strew'd !

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
In lowly pomp ride on to die !
O Christ ! Thy triumphs now begin
O'er captive Death and conquered Sin !

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
The winged squadrons of the sky
Look down with sad and wondering eyes
To see the approaching sacrifice !

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
Thy last and fiercest strife is nigh ;
The Father on his sapphire throne
Expects His own anointed Son !

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
In lowly pomp ride on to die !
Bow Thy meek head to mortal pain !
Then take, O God ! Thy power, and reign !

H. H. Milman.

“HE BEHELD THE CITY AND WEPT OVER IT.”—

St. Luke xix. 41.



HE Lord of Heaven and Earth weeping ? Was it because all around Him now shouting Hosanna must so soon rest cold and silent in the grave ? Was it that the hours of His own Passion already lay dark and heavy on His soul ? Was it that He, in His divine foreknowledge, wept for the souls that would not, after all, see the things that belonged unto their peace ? He would not weep because their Lord must suffer in order to save their souls. He might weep to know that these souls would reject His great salvation. He might also, indeed, weep at the prevision of the individual tortures of mind and body to be borne during the awful destruction He was foretelling. Twice are we told that our Saviour wept : once on this occasion, and once when Lazarus lay dead, and He saw the grief of Lazarus's sisters and their friends.

Those two little words, the shortest verse in the whole Divine Book, have perhaps touched more hearts, softened more souls—sealed and closed, as it were, under some heavy sorrow—than any others. Obdurate as we may be under our sufferings, willing to believe hard things of God, of our neighbor, of our ill fortune, as we call it, these two little words condemn us. He who afflicts us wept also. He could weep and feel as man for man's suffering, man's death ; He wept for others' grief and His own, though He knew He could relieve it instantly. He cannot, unmoved, behold our tears, our bitter pain and woe, our bitter dreariness and desolation. He does not behold them unmoved ; He enters into every detail of every sorrow ; Himself "took our sorrows and bare our sicknesses." His Divine sympathy is as deep and penetrating as His compassion is large and vast. Only His pity rests not only in the present suffering of the body, or of the spirit. The pain is sent with an object, and if that fail—if He see that we persist in rejecting the lesson sent to us, and the right source of consolation and strength under our sufferings, He may, indeed, weep for us, as for the Holy City, tears of prophetic sorrow. Let us, then, strive that it be not so—that He may give to us, as to the beloved Lazarus and his sisters, a deep

loving share in His divine sympathy ; but not, as to Jerusalem, a share in His divine despair.

Lady Charlotte Maria Pepys.

“ **St. Chrysostom** has a reflection, as a warning to us, that we take care that the Lord have not to weep over us, for we are that Jerusalem over which He weeps ; yea, much more unhappy than that, if, after the word of truth hath been declared unto us, we fall into sin. Gregory as beautifully dwells on the same interpretation : ‘ Our Redeemer, through His elect, ceases not to mourn over us, when He considers some who, after a good life, have fallen into reprobate manners ; who, if they would but perceive that damnation which hangeth over them, would join their own tears also with those of the elect. But the perverse soul, that delighteth in this transitory time, hath its day ; in the which are set before it the things that belong to its peace, while it taketh delight from temporal things, and refuseth to foresee those future things which may disturb its present joy.’

“ He afterwards adds : ‘ But the depraved mind God assiduously visits by precept ; sometimes by the scourge, and sometimes by miracle, in order that it may return, being touched with compunc-

tion and sorrow ; or overcome by benefits, may blush for the evil it hath done. But, because it knoweth not the day of its visitation, in the end of life it is delivered up to its enemies.' The same writer dwells also, particularly and at length, on the adaptation of this fearful prophecy to spiritual enemies, when they shall besiege and overthrow a soul, at length given up to their power ; drawing out more fully the same application of Origen. Quesnel also does the same : 'Our blessed Saviour,' he says, 'speaks here only of the temporal punishment which was to be inflicted on the Jews, to the end that all may understand that this is but a figure and shadow of that which the Divine justice prepares for sinners in the other life.'

"If God by such external punishments as these takes vengeance on the Jews for their contempt of Christ's external visitation by His incarnation, preaching, miracles, and mysteries, what ought not an unfaithful soul to fear, which He has visited internally, and made His habitation, palace and royal city, by His grace and sacraments ? Lord, let the serious consideration of so great a desolation as this excite in me a salutary dread of losing Thee.

"May God grant that we may feel for ourselves as He feels for us ! May we feel for ourselves as

His angels, who watch over us, feel for us. For if they rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, doubtless they sympathize in their Master's tears. May we feel for ourselves as the saints, which are with God, feel for us. For, even in the place of the wicked, the rich man was moved at the thought of that desolation that was coming on his five brethren in the flesh ; much more do the spirits of the good feel for us, while we, haply, are rejoicing in worldly delights."

Monday in Holy Week.

The Cursing of the Fig-Tree.



IN the morning, as He returned into the city, He hungered.

And when He saw a fig-tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it: Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.

And when His disciples saw it they marvelled, saying: How soon is the fig-tree withered away!

Monday in Holy Week.

Unfruitfulness.

My soul ! what hast thou done for God ?
Look o'er thy misspent years and see ;
Sum up what thou hast done for God,
And then what God hath done for thee.

He made thee when He might have made
A soul that would have loved Him more ;
He rescued thee from nothingness,
And set thee on life's happy shore.

He placed an angel at thy side,
And strewed joys round thee on thy way ;
He gave thee rights thou couldst not claim,
And life, free life, before thee lay.

Had God in Heaven no work to do,
But miracles of love for thee ?
No world to rule, no joy in self,
And in His own infinity ?

So must it seem to our blind eyes ;
He gave His love no Sabbath rest,
Still plotting happiness for men,
And new designs to make them blest.

From out His glorious bosom came
His only, His eternal Son ;
He freed the race of Satan's slaves,
And with His Blood sin's captives won.

The world rose up against His love :
New love the vile rebellion met,
As though God only looked at sin
Its guilt to pardon and forget.

For His Eternal Spirit came
To raise the thankless slaves to sons,
And with the sevenfold gifts of love
To crown His own elected ones.

Men spurned His grace ; their lips blasphemed
The Love who made Himself their slave ;
They grieved that blessed Comforter,
And turned against Him what He gave.

Yet still the sun is fair by day,
The moon still beautiful by night ;
The world goes round, and joy with it,
And life, free life, is men's delight.

No voice God's wondrous silence breaks,
No hand put forth His anger tells ;
And He, the Omnipotent and Dread,
On high in humblest patience dwells.

The Son hath come ; and maddened sin
The world's Creator crucified ;
The Spirit comes, and stays, while men
His presence doubt, His gifts deride.

And now the Father keeps Himself,
In patient and forbearing love,
To be His creature's heritage,
In that undying life above.

O wonderful, O passing thought !
The love that God hath had for thee,
Spending on thee no less a sum
Than the Undivided Trinity !

Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost,
Exhausted for a thing like this,—
The world's whole government disposed
For one ungrateful creature's bliss.

What hast thou done for God, my soul ?
Look o'er thy misspent years and see ;
Cry from thy worse than nothingness,
Cry for His mercy upon thee.

Faber.

I have no wit, no words, no tears ;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or fears ;
Look right, look left, I dwell alone ;

I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief—
No everlasting hills I see ;
My life is in the falling leaf :
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk ;
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk ;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud or greenness can I see :
Yet rise it shall—the sap of spring ;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold ;
Cast in the fire the perished thing,
Melt and remould it, till it be
A royal cup for Him, my King :
O Jesus, drink of me.

Christina Rossetti.



HE proper keeping of these memorial days, no doubt, occasions us all more or less thought. We all probably think as Palm Sunday dawns upon us (the only Sunday that seems not truly a feast day) that this is the Great Week, and that all our thoughts should be som-

bre, all our business worship, all our pleasure prayer. But Monday comes like other Mondays ; pleasure offers, from little, unexpected, and insidious channels ; business presses, with its hard face, and the world laughs a careless laugh at the chimera of a sorrow.

But let it pause before it decides that it is a chimerical solemnity. Good-Friday is the anniversary of a Saviour's death ; hundreds and hundreds have already been spent in mourning by the Christian world. This is the anniversary of the last week on which He walked the earth ; so cruel to Him then, so careless of Him now. Shall we not try to do our part towards wiping out the stain of that ingratitude, and watch with Him one hour ? There is not very much that is tangible left us to encourage our devotion : our worship is to be a spiritual one. The day of our Saviour's birth has not been given to us ;

“ And fast as evening sunbeams from the sea,
His footsteps all in Sion's deep decay
Were blotted from the holy ground :—”

Even His place of sepulchre is sacred from association, not from certainty. We cannot tell when His public ministry began : there is no Day

of Baptism for us to keep holy ; but, guided by the Jewish Feast, the Church suffers us to hope that on these days of His Passion and Resurrection we may without presumption say and feel, "On *this* day, at this hour, my Holy Master suffered such and such pains for me."

We have one Holy Week ; then let us keep it holy, mark it with our best devotions, separate it as far as it is in our power from all profane and common uses. Let no one be ashamed to feel, through the length of this long week, as if a burden were laid upon him ; as if a dear friend had died ; as if the household wore fresh mourning. No one will be the worse for a fast like this ; no one will be the sadder through the year for keeping "the silence of Christ's dying day" unbroken in his heart."

And how, in the midst of a merry or a scoffing world ?

Our Saviour will accept our loving remembrance of Him, no matter through what mist of difficulties it may arise to Him. We can remember Him in Holy Week, every hour of every day, though but two hours be spent in church. The devout intention of our heart, the honest consecration of the week to Him, as far as our enemies permit, this is what He seeks and all He asks. To trace His life, as far as we are

able, through each successive day ; to bear Him continually in our thoughts ; to give up, honestly, all worldly pleasures that are in our choice ; to dedicate all leisure that is not taken up by necessary rest to meditation, prayer, and works of charity ; to banish foolish thinking ; to sober all our work and plans with a thought of " what my Lord was suffering now ; " this is, honestly fulfilled, a wise and well kept Holy Week.

It is not a debt paid ; heaven forbid ! But it is something done towards binding ourselves closer to the Heart that bled for us, towards entering more into Its love, and learning more of Its everlasting wisdom. If we have suffered with Him we shall also reign with Him.

The moments least wasted in our year perhaps will be the silent, struggling, possibly unsatisfied hours of Holy Week ; hours in which we have tried to fasten our thoughts on the infinite, and to fill our poor imaginations with a story at which bright angels have grown pale and trembled. The attempt may have seemed a failure to us ; our thoughts may have fallen very far below their aim ; our fancy may have tired before the task was taken up ; our prayers may have chilled us as they left our lips ; but our Lord knows our hearts, and remembers that we are but dust. No honest, earnest effort to deserve His love was

ever lost. If He replies not now, He will hereafter, in our soul's health, in our inward prosperity.

“It was ‘the appearance of life,’ says Origen, ‘without fruit, the profession of faith only, with no fruit thereon.’ ‘There were leaves only—‘pharisaical traditions,’ says St. Hilary. ‘The justification of the law,’ says St. Augustine, ‘without the fruits of truth.’ It was, ‘by the way,’—on the same way that the good Samaritan was travelling into the heavenly city; it was ‘by the way’ of righteousness, the way of obedience; for it was in fulfilling the law that He came unto Jerusalem, as by duty bound, unto the Feast of the Passover. He came, ‘if haply He might find fruit thereon;’ not, indeed, as if expecting much, but as the faithful Abraham interceding for Sodom,—‘if, peradventure, ten be found there.’ And when He came unto it, He found nothing but leaves only, and empty semblances of religion, for ‘it was not yet the time of fruit with them.’ But these strange and unexplained words may leave us a hope that even with them also the season of fruits may yet come. But not on that withered and accursed stock, indeed; unless it be in the time of Antichrist that

the evil stock shall again put itself forth, when 'the fig-tree shall shoot forth,' and we shall know of ourselves that the eternal 'summer is nigh.' St. Ambrose thus takes the fig-tree for the synagogue in the place where our Lord speaks of it as putting forth leaves before His second coming. St. Hilary explains, at length, this fig-tree as the faithless synagogue of the Jews, and speaks of it as 'setting forth the image of a future event, when He shall have come in His heavenly kingdom, the sentence of eternal condemnation shall come upon the barrenness of Jewish infidelity.' 'That fig-tree,' says another Latin writer, 'is the synagogue from Cain and the rest, from all of whom blood shall be required, from that of Abel to that of Zacharias.' It is, therefore, that 'fig-tree' which shall be shaken 'by a mighty wind,' 'and cast her untimely figs,' 'like stars falling from heaven, at the next coming of the Son of Man.'

Tuesday in Holy Week.

Christ in the Temple.



ESUS went into the Temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them : "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves."

And the blind and the lame came to Him in the Temple ; and He healed them.

And when the Chief Priests and Scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying in the Temple, and saying : "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were sore displeased, and said unto Him, "Hearest Thou

what these say?" And Jesus saith unto them, "Yea ; have ye never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise'?"

And when He was come into the Temple, the Chief Priests and the Elders of the people came unto Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority doest Thou these things? And who gave Thee this authority?"

And He looked up and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

And He said, "Of a truth I say unto you that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all ; for all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God ; but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had."

Tuesday in Holy Week.

Christ's Sympathy.

If Jesus came on earth again,
And walked and talked in field and street,
Who would not lay his human pain
Low at those heavenly feet?

And leave the loom, and leave the lute,
And leave the volume on the shelf,
To follow Him unquestioning, mute,
If 'twere the Lord Himself?

How many a brow with care o'erworn,
How many a heart with grief o'erladen,
How many a man with woe forlorn,
How many a mourning maiden,

Would leave the baffling earthly prize,
Which fails the earthly weak endeavor,
To gaze into those holy eyes,
And drink content for ever!

His sheep along the cool, the shade,
 By the still watercourse He leads ;
 His lambs upon His breast are laid ;
 His hungry ones He feeds.

And I, where'er He went, would go,
 Nor question where the paths might lead,
 Enough to know that here below
 I walked with God, indeed !

If it be thus, O Lord of mine,
 In absence is Thy love forgot ?
 And must I, when I walk, repine,
 Because I see Thee not ?

If this be thus, if this be thus,
 Since our poor prayers yet reach Thee, Lord ;
 Since we are weak, once more to us
 Reveal the living Word !

Oh, nearer to me, in the dark
 Of life's low hours, one moment stand,
 And give me keener eyes to mark
 The moving of Thy hand.

Owen Meredith.



THE history of Tuesday is fuller than
 of any other day in Holy Week.
 First comes the walk of the
 twelve Apostles and their Lord
 from Bethany, at early morning ;
 when they remarked how the fig-tree, which had

been cursed twenty-four hours before, stood blighted and blasted in the spot where yesterday morning it had looked so fair and flourishing. Repairing, as usual, to the Temple, the Saviour is encountered by many enemies ; who doubtless foresaw that His intention was, throughout this week, to present Himself daily in the Sanctuary of God ; but He put them to silence with a question respecting the Baptism of John ; and then delivered the parables of the Two Sons, and of the Vineyard let out to Husbandmen. In consequence of these discourses (the prophetic character of which they at once perceived), our Lord's enemies sought to lay hands on Him ; but were deterred through fear of the populace. Next, the parable of the King's Son was added ; after which the Pharisees and the Herodians proved Him with a question, respecting the payment of tribute. The Sadducees next assailed our Lord, and were quickly confounded out of their own books. Whereupon the Scribes assailed our Saviour with an inquiry respecting the law. But after our Lord's reply, we hear that none durst ask Him any more questions. In turn, He also put one question, which the Pharisees were not able to answer ; whereby He silenced them for ever. This done, He denounced eight woes upon the

Pharisees and Sadducees ; ending with that passionate lament for Jerusalem : “ How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings ; and ye would not ! ” And Jesus sat over against the Treasury, and He looked up and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the Treasury ; and He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

He arose and left the Temple with His disciples ; prophesying its destruction, as He lingered for a moment on its threshold. Then, taking His seat on the Mount of Olives, the Temple spread out before Him, and all the beautiful buildings of Jerusalem full in view,—in reply to the earnest questionings of Peter and James, and John and Andrew, He spake of when these things should be ; and of what should be the sign of His coming ; and of the end of the world ; in Heaven, the sun darkened, and the moon forgetting to give her light ; and the stars falling, like fruits from the tree ; on earth distress of nations, with perplexity ; the sea and the waves roaring ; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. Lastly, the coming of the Son of Man, in glory, and all His holy angels with Him !

The parables of the wise and foolish Virgins, and of the Talents, followed ; and our Lord described how the just and the wicked shall be dealt with in the Last Day ; after which, it being night, He went out, and *abode* in the Mount of Olives.

Now, the one circumstance in all this wondrous and varied narrative, to which we wish to call attention, is, that amid all these mighty discourses and amazing prophecies ; amid all the weariness of His human body, and the anguish of His human soul ; amid griefs unrevealed, and bitterness of spirit unutterable, the Lord of heaven and earth was at leisure to sit down and watch the ways of one of the very humblest of His creatures. "He saw also a certain poor widow." * * After His eight withering woes denounced upon the Scribes and Pharisees, which must have goaded them to madness (for they were at once the proudest and the most powerful of the people), after *this*, and just *before* He entered upon that far-sighted prophecy which glanced onward, from the coming destruction of the city to the very end of the world,—blending the near and the far future so wondrously, and showing that the Blessed Speaker's eye was filled with images of magnificence and grandeur unspeakable,—the destinies of the whole human race, and the con-

summation of all things :—(the moment is well worth observing, for it was the brief moment which separated the Saviour's discourse concerning the things of Time and of Eternity : the little halting-place between His leave-taking of His enemies, and His anticipation of the ruin which was to be wrought upon them ; first, by His avenging armies ; next, by His legions of angels)—it was at that particular instant, we repeat, and therefore while His heart must have been occupied in the way we have been describing, that our Lord, seating Himself over against the Treasury (that is, the alms-chests which were destined to receive the offerings of the people), looked up, and beheld how they cast money into the Treasury. And many that were rich cast in much. And there came a poor woman, and (as St. Luke remarks) "*He saw her !*" * * * He saw before Him the destruction of the Temple, and the fall of Jerusalem, and the wreck of Nature, and the crash of worlds, and the setting up of the great White Throne, and the gathering together of all the Tribes of the earth : all this He saw. But, "*He saw also a certain poor widow.*" And she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. * * * He had the leisure, had the inclination, had the sovereign will, to scrutinize the act, and to weigh it in a heavenly

balance, and to pronounce upon it,—calmly, and at length,—as if life and death hung upon the issue. He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, “Verily, I say unto you that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all *they* did cast in of their abundance ; but she, of her want, did cast in all she had ; even all her living.”

These gracious words on the lips of our Saviour awaken in us a deep sense of wonder and admiration : they remind us of all we have ever heard or read concerning “the widow’s mite.” But we cannot now afford space for any reflections on the transaction itself. No : we desire to fill our minds with the single thought of God’s watchful and observing eye ; which nothing is so little as to escape ; nothing so trifling as not to interest and engage. The Psalmist has expressed this in a single verse of the cxiii. Psalm,—“Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high ; and yet humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth ?”

Strange as it may appear, we have great need to fill our minds with this thought ; and to convince ourselves of its truth and constancy. It is hard to realize the notion of a Providence which *really* takes note of the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the very hairs of our head. We

all profess to believe it ; but it may well be suspected that there are few indeed who truly entertain the notion of such perfect knowledge, such watchful love, as we are describing. It is not difficult to embrace the conviction that a mighty empire is the object of God's care ; because to us a great empire seems a great thing ; but, that the fortune of the meanest person within that realm, in all its minutest details, should be equally the subject of His concern, *this* seems hardly credible. So again, we find no difficulty in believing that the more considerable events in our own lives are duly noted in the Book of God's remembrance, because they are, *to us*, all in all ; but the various petty chances which day by day befall us ; the many minute acts which go to form a habit, and which together make up a character,—these, because they seem to ourselves so very petty, we are inclined to believe may be by God altogether unheeded. Thus we make ourselves the standard of all things ; and even judge of God's eternal attributes by the measure of our own imperfections.

Surely, we shall do well at this time to try to banish from our minds so serious a mistake ; serious, because this habit of regarding some things as *little* with God, lies at the root of all sin ; and occasions that practical infidelity of

which men are guilty as often as they speak, as if they were overlooked by His Providence ; uncared for, and as it were forsaken by Him : their trials unmeasured, their tears unnoted, their inward bitterness a secret to God as well as to man. Let it be ours to remember that we have to do with One who doth indeed measure the waters in the hollow of His hand, and mete out Heaven with the span, and comprehend the dust of the earth in a measure, and weigh the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance,—yet, who feedeth His flock like a shepherd, and gathereth the lambs with His arm.

Purgon.

Wednesday in Holy Week.

The Betrayal.



OW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Pass-over.

And the Chief Priests and Scribes sought how they might kill Him ; for they feared the people.

Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

And he went his way, and communed with the Chief Priests and Captains how he might betray Him unto them.

And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray Him unto them, in the absence of the multitude.

Wednesday in Holy Week.

Judas Iscariot.

O all ye, who pass by, whose eyes and mind
To worldly things are sharp, but to Me blind ;
To Me, who took eyes that I might you find ;
Was ever grief like Mine ?

Mine own apostle, who the bag did bear,
Though he had all I had, did not forbear
To sell Me also, and to put Me there :
Was ever grief like Mine ?

For thirty pence he did My death devise,
Who at three hundred did the ointment prize,
Not half so sweet as My sweet sacrifice :
Was ever grief like Mine ?

Therefore My soul melts, and My heart's dear treasure
 Drops blood (the only beads) My words to measure ;
 Oh, let this cup pass, if it be Thy pleasure :

Was ever grief like Mine ?

Herbert.



THE exact history of Wednesday in Holy Week is, it must be confessed, somewhat doubtful. What at least is certain,—Judas, as on this day, made his wicked compact with the Chief Priests to betray his Lord to them, for money ; and truly so astonishing a transaction, so black and revolting a crime, may well have the thoughts of a whole day to itself. The event of to-day has been felt in fact by the Church from the earliest period to be so tremendous, that all the Wednesdays in the year derive from the Wednesday in Holy Week a character of solemnity second only to that which the sacrifice of our Lord's death on Good-Friday has imparted to all the other Fridays in the year.

On reviewing the sacred record of the transactions thus brought under our notice, how many thoughts force themselves upon us ! How unlovely seem our gains ! and how unblessed a thing, until God hath blessed it, seems the pursuit of gain ! How subtle, also, must the snare be which could lure an Apostle into the betrayal of the in-

nocent blood ; and that blood, the blood of Him who came into the world to save the world !

Then, further, how unavailing do the loftiest opportunities, the most precious privileges, prove to be, in and by themselves, to promote our chiefest good ! The several trains of thought thus suggested, we may follow out with advantage for ourselves in private. It is proposed now to derive another lesson from the crime of Judas ; which may indeed be regarded as the very mystery of iniquity, and as containing within itself the whole history of sin.

Above all things, probably, we are here struck with the deadening, hardening effect of sin upon the heart. Else, surely, the words of Christ would have melted Judas, many a time, into sorrow,—wrought in him repentance,—awakened in him some natural touch of pity. It was *his Friend* whom he was about to betray,—*his Benefactor* whom he was about to injure so irreparably : the One who had walked with him, and always in meekness and love, for three years and upwards. For a miserable sum of money he was about to work the ruin of One who had displayed so many a time in his presence Almighty power ; yea, who had conferred on himself the gift of working miracles. He was going to deliver into

the hands of men, thirsting (as he was well aware) for nothing less than the blood of their victim, the holy Being who had gone about doing good to all—curing diseases—relieving want—preaching the Gospel—for the space of three years. He would have to look upon that sacred forehead bruised with stones ; those lips, silenced for ever ; those hands, powerless ; those limbs, stark and cold. Never more, if he effected his accursed purpose,—never more by the hillside could they take their simple meal together ; sweetened by *His* solemn converse, made a holy thing by *His* blessing! * * * Never more by the Lake, or upon its gray waters, or along its further coast, would they be found,—those twelve disciples and their Lord ; the words of eternal life flowing the while from His lips, “sweeter than honey or the honeycomb.” * * * Never more in the Garden would they rest at evening together ; seeing Him engaged in mysterious prayer, while they watched and prayed yonder ! * * * Meantime what was to be the Traitor’s compensation for all he was to lose ? What was to be his miserable solace for beholding bloody violence done to the person of Christ ; cruelty and ferocity, and in the end death itself ? It is hard to believe that “thirty pieces of silver” was “the goodly price that He was prized at :” that

for "thirty pieces of silver" Judas was content to lose his soul.

We shall miss the benefit of this warning, we shall indeed, if we suffer our minds to dwell simply upon this latter circumstance ; or indeed to dwell upon it *at all*. We do not for an instant suppose that any one present, that we ourselves, could be induced to commit a monstrous crime for a paltry sum of money. God grant that none of us may ever become in any degree the slaves of the special lust which proved the undoing of Judas ! No. If we desire to profit by the warning of the Gospel, the warning of this day's history, we shall notice rather the hardening, deadening effects of sin,—*any* kind of sin,—upon the heart. It has often been remarked (and it would seem with great truth) that *cruelty* and *lust* commonly go together. They appear widely severed. Softness and indulgence,—the yielding to appetite and inclination,—this whole class of crimes, it might be thought, would shrink from violence and cruelty ; from bloodshed, and the like. But it is not so. Sensual appetite is found to harden the heart quite as much, more perhaps, than covetousness itself. Potiphar's wife was content that Joseph should dwell in prison. Doubtless, she would have endured his death likewise, undisturbed. Herodias wanted to *see* the bleeding

head of John the Baptist in a dish. She desired to feast her impure eyes on the lifeless features of him whose stern rebukes had alone interfered with her guilty pleasures. Consider, again, how David's shameful love for Bathsheba could make him plan Uriah's death : not only take the little ewe-lamb from the poor man, but even become the murderer of him to whom it belonged !

Indeed, that the general tendency of sin, of whatever kind, is to harden the heart, to darken the conscience, to blind the inner eye, there can be no doubt. Still, one would not have thought that it could so deaden the natural instincts of humanity as, in the case of Judas, it is found to have done. Let us take warning, humbly, each one of us, to ourselves. Our Lord pleaded with Judas most tenderly, but it availed not. If the warnings secret and open, which the Traitor received at the lips of Christ, from first to last, are added up, those at the close of the Gospel history especially, we shall be surprised at their frequency, their earnestness, their particularity. But it was all in vain. He was like the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ears, and refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. The fact is thus adverted to only to show that beyond a certain point the very pleadings of Divine Love, the strivings of God's in-

dwelling Spirit,—grieved, yet still indwelling,—may be, must be, in vain.

And it is worth our observing, in connexion with this subject, that the Divinity of Christ's person cannot have been so apparent a matter, as, in our devotion towards our Redeemer and our God, we are sometimes apt to imagine. There must have been a very thick mantle spread over His Godhead. The glory of His Deity must have been curtained close; so very close, that scarcely a ray,—if even so much as a ray,—could ever break through, and meet the eyes of men. Everything in the Gospel helps to show this. He spoke like a Galilean. No one is ever said to have been struck by His aspect. His voice did not, by any means, always persuade. His speech was cavilled at. Men asked Him to depart out of their coasts. Towards the close of His ministry,—as every day's Gospel reminds us, till our hearts sicken at the dismal tale,—soldiers could strike Him with their fists, and smite Him with their open palms; blindfold Him; force a thorny crown into His temples; scourge Him; spit upon Him; torture His parched lips with gall; crucify Him; thrust a spear into His lifeless side. Now, we know what *might* have been, had He willed. Once only He appeared to three of His disciples, in the nearest approach to His

proper glory, which their mortal eyes could bear to look upon and live : and next day, when He descended the Holy Mount, the multitude “came running to Him.” But this was only for a moment. It soon passed away. In His person, then, and doubtless in many other respects also, our Lord’s Divinity was not very apparent,—*could* not have been *very* apparent,—while He was on earth, or men would not have rejected Him ; His own nation would not have crucified Him ; Judas would not have betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver. To a few the Divinity of His sayings was doubtless known : by some few, in His person, He was *seen* to be “fairer than the children of men.” Yea, the blind eyes could behold Him ; the deaf ears were enraptured by His voice. And this brings us back exactly to what we desire to enforce ; namely, that it depends on the heart of man whether Christ shall be recognised or not ; whether (like Judas) we shall discern Him nowhere,—neither in His Word nor in His Sacraments ; or whether it shall seem to us that He beautifies our lives with His abiding presence, and encircles us with countless tokens of His enduring love. It is sin that hardens the heart, and darkens the inner eye ; whereas, “Blessed are the pure in heart” (it is written), “for they shall see God.”

Burton.

In love Thou comest to Thine own,
But by Thine own rejected art ;
A place wherein to lay Thy head,
Jerusalem will not impart.
In her there is no room for Thee ;
Thy home is lowly Bethany.

O Man of Sorrows ! drear and rude
The path that now before Thee lies,
Gethsemane, the bitter cup,
Depths of unfathom'd agonies ;
The weight of woes that on Thee lay,
Nailed to the cross at Golgotha.

But through that fierce and furious storm,
Through all the hurricane and shock
Of mockery and fiendish hate,
That beat like surges on the Rock,
God brings Thee to the crystal sea
Of glorious immortality.

O Saviour, Thine example shines
With splendor luminous, and pure,
To all on life's dark billows tost,
Like to the polar Cynosure ;
Guide us in meekness, Lord, with Thee,
To calms of blest eternity.

Dr. Wordsworth.

Thursday in Holy Week.

The Last Supper.



THE first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, His disciples said unto Him, "Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare, that Thou mayest eat the pass-over?"

And He sendeth forth two of His disciples, and saith unto them, "Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water : follow him.

"And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, 'The Master saith, where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?'

"And he will show you a large upper room

furnished and prepared : there make ready for us."

And His disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as He had said unto them : and they made ready the passover.

And in the evening He cometh with the twelve.

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, "Take, eat ; this is My body."

And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, and they all drank of it.

And He said unto them, "This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many.

"Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

And when they had sung an hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives.

Thursday in Holy Week.

Gethsemane.

My disciples sleep : I cannot gain
One hour of watching ; but their drowsy brain
Comforts not Me, and doth My doctrine stain ;
Was ever grief like Mine ?

Arise, arise, they come. Look how they run !
Alas ! what haste they make to be undone !
How with their lanterns do they seek the sun !
Was ever grief like Mine ?

With clubs and staves they seek Me as a thief,
Who am the way of truth, the true relief ;
Most true to those who are My greatest grief :
Was ever grief like Mine ?

Judas, dost thou betray Me with a kiss ?
Canst thou find hell about My lips ? and miss
Of life, just at the gates of life and bliss ?
Was ever grief like Mine ?

See, they lay hold on Me, not with the hands
Of faith, but fury ; yet at their commands
I suffer binding, who have loosed their bands ;
Was ever grief like Mine ?

All My disciples fly ; fear puts a bar
Betwixt My friends and Me. They leave the Star
That brought the wise men of the East from far :
Was ever grief like Mine ?

Herbert.

MARK XIV. 41-42.



AND He cometh the third time, and saith unto them, sleep on now, and take your rest ; it is enough, the hour is come ; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go ; lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand."

It is upon two sentences of this passage that our attention is to be fixed to-day ; sentences which in themselves are apparently contradictory, but which are pregnant with a lesson of the deepest practical import. Looked at in the mere meaning of the words, as they stand, our Lord's first command, given to His disciples, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," is inconsistent with the second command, which follows almost in the same breath, "Rise, let us be go-

ing." A permission to slumber and a warning to arouse at once, are injunctions which can scarcely stand together in the same sentence, consistently.

Our first inquiry therefore is—What did our Redeemer mean? We shall arrive at the true solution of this difficulty, if we review the circumstances under which these words were spoken. The account with which these verses stand connected belongs to one of the last scenes in the drama of our Master's earthly pilgrimage; it is found in the history of the trial hour which was passed in the Garden of Gethsemane. And an hour it was indeed big with the destinies of the world; for the command had gone forth to seize the Saviour's person; but the Saviour was still at large, and free. Upon the success or the frustration of that plan the world's fate was trembling. Three men were selected to be witnesses of the sufferings of that hour: three men, the favored ones on all occasions of the apostolic band,—and the single injunction which had been laid upon them was, "Watch with Me one hour." That charge to watch, or keep awake, seems to have been given with two ends in view. He asked them to keep awake, first, that they might sympathize with Him. He commanded them to keep awake, that they might be on their guard

against surprise ; that they might afford sympathy, because never in all His career did Christ more stand in need of such soothing as it was in the power of man to give.

It is true, that was not much : the struggle and the agony, and the making up of the mind to death, had something in them too divine and too mysterious to be understood by the disciples, and therefore sympathy could but reach a portion of what our Redeemer felt. Yet still, it appears to have been an additional pang in Christ's anguish to find that He was left thoroughly alone to endure ; while even His own friends did not compassionate His endurance. We know what a relief it is to see the honest, affectionate face of a menial servant, or some poor dependent, regretting that your suffering may be infinitely above his comprehension. It may be a secret, which you cannot impart to him ; or it may be a mental distress, which his mind is too uneducated to appreciate ; yet still his sympathy in your dark hour is worth a world. What you suffer he knows not ; but he knows you do suffer, and it pains him to think of it : there is balm to you in that. This is the power of sympathy. We can do little for one another in this world. Little, very little, can be done when the worst must come ; but yet, to know that the pulses of a

human heart are vibrating with yours, there is something in that, let the distance between man and man be ever so immeasurable, exquisitely soothing. It was this, and but this, in the way of feeling, that Christ asked of Peter, James, and John. Watch,—be awake ; let Me not feel that when I agonize, you can be at ease and comfortable. But it would seem there was another thing which He asked in the way of assistance. The plot to capture Him was laid ; the chance of that plot's success lay in making the surprise so sudden as to cut off all possibility of escape. The hope of defeating that plot depended upon the fidelity of apostolic vigilance. Humanly speaking, had they been vigilant, they might have saved Him. Breathless, listening for the sound of footsteps in the distance ; eyes anxiously straining through the trees, to distinguish the glitter of the lanterns ; unremitting apprehension ; catching from the word of Christ an intimation that He was in danger, and so giving notice on the first approach of anything like intrusion,—that would have been watching.

That command to watch was given twice ; first, when Christ first retired aside, leaving the disciples by themselves ; secondly, in a reproachful way, when He returned and found His request disregarded. He waked them up once, and

said, "What, could you not watch with Me one hour?" He came again, and found their eyes closed once more. On that occasion not a syllable fell from His lips; He did not waken them a second time; He passed away, sad and disappointed, and left them to their slumbers. But when He came the third time it was no longer possible for their sleep to do Him harm, or their watching to do Him good. The precious opportunity was lost for ever. Sympathy, vigilance, the hour for these was past. The priests had succeeded in their surprise, and Judas had well led them through the dark, with unerring accuracy, to the very spot where his Master knelt; and there were seen quite close the dark figures shown in relief against the glare of the red torchlight, and every now and then the gleam glittering from the bared steel and the Roman armor. It was all over; they might sleep as they liked; their sleeping could do no injury now, their watching could do no good. And therefore, partly in bitterness, partly in reproach, partly in a kind of earnest irony, partly in sad earnest, our Master said to His disciples, Sleep on now; there is no use in watching now; take your rest for ever, if you will; sleep and rest can do Me no more harm now, for all that watching might have done is lost.

But, brethren, we have to observe, that in the next sentence our Redeemer addresses Himself to the consideration of what could yet be done ; the best thing, as circumstances then stood. So far as any good to be got from watching went, they might sleep on ; there was no reparation for the fault that had been done ; but so far as duty went, there was still much of endurance to which they had to rouse themselves. They could not save their Master, but they might loyally and manfully share His disgrace, and if it must be, His death. They could not put off the penalty, but they might steel themselves cheerfully to share it. Safety was out of the question now ; but they might meet their fate instead of being overwhelmed by it ; and so, as respected what was gone by, Christ said, "Sleep ;" what is done cannot be undone ; but as respected the duties that were lying before them still, He said, We must make the best of it that can be made ; rouse yourselves to dare the worst ; on to enact your parts like men. Rise, let us be going, we have something still left to do.

The words of Christ are not like the words of other men : His sentences do not end with the occasion which called them forth : every sentence of Christ's is a deep principle of human life ; and

it is so with these sentences. "Sleep on now;" that is a principle. "Rise up, and let us be going;" that is another principle. The principle contained in "sleep on now" is this, that the past is irreparable; and after a certain moment, waking will do no good. You may improve the future,—the past is gone beyond recovery. As to all that is gone by, so far as the hope of altering it goes, you may sleep on, and take your rest: there is no power in earth or heaven that can undo what has once been done.

Our Master did not limit His apostles to a regretful recollection of their failure. Recollection of it He did demand. There were the materials of a most cutting self-reproach in the few words He said; for they contained all the desolation of that sad word, *Never*. Who knows not what that word wraps up? Never,—it never can be undone! Sleep on; but yet there was no sickly lingering over the irreparable. Our Master's words are the words of one who had fully recognised the hopelessness of his position, but yet manfully and calmly had numbered his resources, and scanned his duties, and then braced up his mind to meet the exigencies of his situation with no passive endurance: the moment was come for action; "Rise, let us be going."

Now, the broad, general lesson which we gain

from this is not hard to read. It is, that a Christian is to be for ever rousing himself to recognise the duties which lie before him *now*. In Christ, the motto is ever this, "Let us be going." Let me speak to the conscience of some one. Perhaps yours is a very remorseful past ; a foolish, frivolous, disgraceful, frittered past. Well, Christ says,—My servant, be sad, but no languor ; there is work to be done for Me yet. Rise up, be going ! Oh, my brethren, Christ takes your wretched remnants of life,—the feeble pulses of a heart which has spent its best hours, not for Him, but for self and for enjoyment,—and in His strange love, He condescends to accept them.

Under no circumstances, whether of pain, or grief, or disappointment, or irreparable mistake, can it be true that there is not something to be done, as well as something to be suffered. And thus it is that the spirit of Christianity draws over our life, not a leaden cloud of remorse and despondency, but a sky ; not perhaps of radiant, but yet of most serene, and chastened, and manly hope. There is a past which is gone for ever. But there is a future which is still our own.

Robertson.

At the supper with the Twelve,
Thou, O Christ, wast seated ;
And hadst prophesied Thy death,
Soon to be completed :
And hadst pointed Judas out
By the morsel meted ;
And unto Gethsemane
After, hadst retreated.

Prostrate fell the Lord of all,
Where He had proceeded ;
That the cup might pass away,
Earnestly He pleaded :
But unto His Father's will
That His own conceded :
And forthwith a sweat of Blood
O'er his members speeded.

After that, the Traitor's Kiss
Judas came to proffer :
" Wherefore com'st thou, friend ? " the Lord
Saith unto the scoffer.
" Thou to Him whom thou hast sold,
Salutation offer ?
Thou, who hadst the price of blood
From His murderers' coffer ? "

All the weary, livelong night,
Neither rest nor sleeping ;
Armed bands of soldiery
Watch round Jesus keeping ;
Priests and Scribes upon His head
Foul reproaches heaping ;
Who might see the Spotless Lamb,
And refrain from weeping ?

From a Hymn of the Twelfth Century.

Good-Friday.

The Crucifixion.



WHEN Pilate, therefore, took Jesus, and scourged Him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head; and they put on Him a purple robe, and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they smote Him with their hands.

Pilate, therefore, went forth again, and saith unto them, "Behold, I bring Him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in Him."

Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, "Behold the Man!"

Then delivered he Him, therefore, unto them,

to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away.

And He, bearing His cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha : where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

Good-Friday.

The Cross.

Up to the Hill of Calvary,
With Christ our Lord ascending,
We deem that Cross our victory,
'Neath which His knees are bending.
What soldier is of generous strain?
One honor let him cherish :
With Christ upon the battle plain
A thousand times to perish !

On must the faithful warrior go,
Whereso the Chief proceedeth ;
And all true hearts will seek the foe
Where'er the Banner leadeth :
Our highest victory,—it is loss :
No cup hath such completeness
Of gall, but that remembered Cross
Will turn it into sweetness !

Doth sickness hover o'er thy head,
In weakness art thou lying?
Behold upon the Cross's bed
Thy sick Physician dying!
No member in the holy frame
That there for thee must languish,
But what thy pride hath clothed with shame,—
But what thy sin, with anguish!

Have wealth and honor spread their wing,
And left thee all unfriended?
See naked on the Cross thy King,
And thy regrets are ended.
The fox hath where to lay his head,
Her nest receives the sparrow;
Thy Monarch, for His latest bed
One plank hath, hard and narrow!

Thy good name suffers from the tongue
Of slanderers and oppressors,
Jesus, as on the cross He hung,
Was reckoned with transgressors.
More than the nails and than the spear
His sacred limbs assailing,
Judea's children pierced His ear
With blasphemy and railing.

Fearest thou the death that comes to all,
And knows no interceder?
O glorious struggle!—thou wilt fall
The soldier by the Leader!
Christ went with death to grapple first,
And vanquished him before thee;

His darts then, let him do his worst,
Can win no triumph o'er thee.

And if thy conscience brands each sense
With many a past defilement,
Here by the fruits of penitence,
Hope thou for reconciliation !
For He who bowed His holy head,
In death serenely sleeping,
Hath grace on contrite hearts to shed,
And pardon for the weeping ! "Amen."

Translated by Neale.



AS not our Lord indeed the perfectly brave man—the man who endured more than all living men put together, at the very time that He had the most intense fear of what He was going to suffer? And stranger still, endured it of His own will, while He had it in His power to shake it all off any instant, and free Himself utterly from pain and suffering.

Now this speech of our Lord's in the text ("Let us go into Judea again") is just a case of true fortitude. He was beyond Jordan. He had been forced to escape thither to save His life from the mad, blinded Jews. He had no foolhardiness; He knew that He had no more right than we have to put His life in danger when there was no good to be done by it.

But now there *was* good to be done by it. Lazarus was dead, and He wanted to raise him to life ; therefore He said to His disciples, " Let us go into Judea again." They knew the danger ; they said, " Master, the Jews of late sought to stone Thee, and goest Thou thither again ? " But He would go : He had a work to do, and He dared bear anything to do His work. Aye, here is the secret ; this is the feeling which gives a man true courage, the feeling that he has a work to do at all costs, the sense of duty. And now, remember that there was no pride, no want of feeling to keep up our Lord's courage. He has tasted sorrow for every man, woman, and child, and therefore He has tasted fear also ; tempted in all things, like as we are, that in all things He might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, that there might be no poor soul terrified at the thought of pain or sorrow, but could comfort themselves with the thought, Well, the Son of God knows what fear is. He who said that His soul was troubled—He who at the thought of death was in such agony of terror, that His sweat ran down to the ground like great drops of blood—He who cried in His agony, " Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," He understands my pain ; He tells me not to be ashamed of crying in my pain, like Him : " Father, if it

be possible, let this cup pass from me,' for He will give me strength to finish that prayer of His, and in the midst of my trouble say, "Nevertheless, Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Remember, again, that our Lord was not, like the martyrs of old, forced to undergo His sufferings whether He liked them or not. We are too apt to forget that, and therefore we misunderstand our Lord's example, and therefore we misunderstand what true fortitude is. Jesus Christ was the Son of God; He had made the very men who were tormenting Him; He had made the very wood of the cross on which He hung, the iron which pierced His blessed hands; and for aught we know, one wish of His, and they would all have crumbled into dust, and He have been safe in a moment. But He would not. He *endured* the cross. He was the only man who ever really endured anything, because He alone, of all men, had perfect power to save Himself, even when He was nailed to the tree, fainting, bleeding, dying. It was never too late for Him to stop. As He said to Peter when he wanted to fight for Christ: "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" But *He would not*. He had to save the

world, and He was determined to do it, whatever agony or fear it cost Him.

Christ—the meekest of men, and the bravest too. And so books say, and seem to prove it, by many strange stories, that the lion, while he is the strongest and bravest of beasts of prey, is also the most patient and merciful. And so with our blessed Lord. The Bible calls Him the Lion of Judah; but it also calls Him the Lamb, dumb before the shearers. Ah, my friends, we must come back to Him, for all the little that is great and noble in man or woman, or dumb beast even, is perfected in Him; He only is perfectly great, perfectly noble, brave, meek. He who, to save us sinful men, endured the cross, despising the shame, till He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; perfectly brave He is, and perfectly gentle, and will be so for ever; for even at His second coming, when He shall appear the conqueror of hell, with tens of thousands of angels, to take vengeance on those who know not God, and destroy the wicked with the breath of his mouth, even then, in His fiercest anger, the Scriptures tell us, His anger shall be “the wrath of the Lamb.”

Almighty vengeance and just anger, and yet perfect gentleness and love all the while. Mystery of mysteries! The wrath of the Lamb!

May God give us all to feel in that day, not the wrath, but the love of the Lamb who was slain for us !

Kingsley.

Am I a stone, and not a sheep,
That I can stand, O Christ, beneath Thy cross,
To number drop by drop Thy Blood's slow loss,
And yet not weep ?

Not so those women loved,
Who with exceeding grief lamented Thee ;
Not so fallen Peter weeping bitterly ;
Not so the thief was moved ;

Not so the Sun and Moon,
Which hid their faces in a starless sky,
A horror of great darkness at broad noon,—
I, only I.

Yet give not o'er,
But seek Thy sleep, true Shepherd of the flock ;
Greater than Moses, turn and look once more,
And smite a rock.

C. Rossetti.

The fire to which our Heavenly Father had sacrificed His Son had long smouldered on the earth ; the wood of the cross gave it fresh vigor ; the oil of mercy which descended thereon in-

creased its fury. The blasphemies and invectives of the Jews swept around like a howling whirlwind, and fanned its flames to heaven. See even the stony heart of the thief is melted, he **can** no longer withstand the influence of a love **so** great; the deepest compassion fills his soul, and he bursts forth into lamentations, not for his own, but for his Lord's unmerited sufferings.

Tauler.

The Royal Banners forward go,
The Cross shines forth in mystic glow;
Where He in flesh, our flesh Who made,
Our sentence bore, our ransom paid.

Where deep for us the spear was dy'd,
Life's torrent rushing from His side,
To wash us in that precious flood,
Where mingled water flowed, and blood.

Fulfill'd is all that David told
In true prophetic song of old;
Amidst the nations God, saith he,
Hath reign'd and triumph'd from the **Tree**.

O Tree of Beauty! Tree of Light!
O Tree with royal purple dight!
Elect on whose triumphal breast
Those holy limbs should find their **rest**!

On whose dear arms, so widely flung,
The weight of this world's ransom hung :
The price of human kind to pay,
And spoil the Spoiler of his prey.

O Cross, our one reliance, hail !
This holy Passiontide, avail
To give fresh merit to the Saint,
And pardon to the penitent.

To Thee, Eternal Three in One,
Let homage meet by all be done ;
Whom by the cross Thou dost restore,
Preserve and govern evermore.

Venantius Fortunatus.

What hast Thou done, O dearly loved Son of God, that thus Thou art judged ? What is the reason of Thy death ? What the grounds of Thy condemnation ? I—I am the lash of Thy scourge. I have brought Thee to the cross, with all its agonies. Oh, marvellous sentence, mysterious resolution ! the godless sin, and the Just One suffers ; what the wicked merit, the good endure ; what the servant owes, the Master pays ; what man commits, God takes upon Himself. How deeply, O Lord, hast Thou condescended in this humility ! What grace, what benevolence, what love, what compassion hast Thou

displayed ! I do evil, Thou bearest my chastisement ; I am proud, Thou abasest Thyself ; I am intemperate, Thou art an hungered ; I seek after enjoyment, Thou art pierced with nails ; I taste the sweetness of the apple, Thou the bitterness of gall ; with me Eve laughs and rejoices, with Thee Mary weeps and suffers.

Anselm.

With the soldiers, straitly bound,
Forth the Saviour fareth :
Over all His holy Form,
Bleeding wounds He beareth ;
He a crown of woven thorns,
King of Glory, weareth,
And each one, with bended knee,
Fresher taunts prepareth.

They Thy mild and tender flesh,
O Redeemer, baring,
To the column bind Thee fast
For the scourge preparing ;
Thus the Ransom of our peace
Cruel stripes are tearing,
As the streams that flow therefrom
Fully are declaring.

After passed He through the street,
As the morn grew older,
And the heavy bitter cross
Bare He on His shoulder :

Thronged the windows and the doors
Many a rude beholder ;
But He found no comforter
There, and no upholder.

Him, in open sight of men
Manifestly shaming,
To the wind and cold they bare,
Utmost insults framing ;
Guiltless, on the cross they lift
With transgressors naming,
Him, as midmost of the three,
Chief of all proclaiming.

On the wood His arms are stretched,
And His hands are riven ;
Through the tender flesh of Christ
Mighty nails are driven ;
In like wise His blessed feet
Are to torture given,
As the hands that had so oft
In our battle striven.

Streams of blood are trickling down
From those holy sources ;
Hither ! weak and sinful soul !
And renew thy forces ;
This the medicine that shall cure
Terrors and remorses ;
This the writing that for us
Freedom's deed endorses.

Calling on Thy Father's name
Thy last breath was spendèd ;
And Thy Spirit in His hands
Gently was commended ;
With a loud and mighty cry
Then Thy head was bended,
And the work that brought Thee down,
Of salvation, ended.

But by heart and thought of man
That is past conceiving,
How the Virgin Mother's soul
Inmosty was grieving
When the soldier's bitter lance
That dear side was cleaving ;
Cruel mark upon His frame,
Of its passage leaving.

That blest form could feel no more,
Whence had life departed ;
'Twas the Mother's anguished soul
'Neath the wound that smarted,
When she marked how through His side
That sharp lance was darted,
And the streams of water thence,
And of blood that started.

Wherefore, sinner, haste to these
Fountains of salvation ;
Life thou mayest draw therefrom,
And illumination :

Cure thou mayest find for sin,
Strength to meet temptation,
Refuge may'st thou gain against
Satan's condemnation.

A Hymn of the 12th century, translated by Neale.

O soul of Jesus, sick to death !
Thy Blood and prayer together plead ;
My sins have bowed Thee to the ground,
As the storm bows the feeble reed.

Midnight, and still the oppressive load
Upon Thy tortured Heart doth lie ;
Still the abhorred procession winds
Before Thy spirit's quailing eye.

Deep waters have come in, O Lord !
All darkly on Thy Human Soul ;
And clouds of supernatural gloom
Around Thee are allowed to roll.

The weight of the Eternal wrath
Drives over Thee with pressure dread ;
And, forced upon the olive roots,
In deathlike sadness droops Thy Head.

Thy spirit weighs the sins of men ;
Thy science fathoms all their guilt ;
Thou sickenest heavily at Thy Heart,
And the pores open,—Blood is spilt.

And Thou hast struggled with it, Lord !
Even to the limit of Thy strength ;
While hours, whose minutes were as years,
Slowly fulfilled their weary length,

And Thou hast shuddered at each act,
And shrunk with an astonished fear,
As if thou could'st not bear to see
The loathsomeness of sin so near.

Sin and the Father's anger ! they
Have made Thy lower nature faint ;
All, save the love within Thy Heart,
Seemed for the moment to be spent.

My God ! My God ! and can it be,
That I should sin so lightly now,
And think no more of evil thoughts
Than of the wind that waves the bough ?

I sin—and heaven and earth go round,
As if no dreadful deed were done,
As if God's Blood had never flowed
To hinder sin or to atone.

I walk the earth with lightsome step,
Smile at the sunshine, breathe the air,
Do my own will, nor ever heed
Gethsemane and Thy long prayer.

Shall it be alway thus, O Lord ?
Wilt thou not work this hour in me
The grace Thy Passion merited,
Hatred of self and love of Thee ?

Oh ! by the pains of Thy pure love,
Grant me the gift of holy fear ;
And give me of Thy bloody sweat
To wash my guilty conscience clear !

Ever when tempted, make me see
Beneath the olive's moon-pierced shade,
My God, alone, outstretched, and bruised,
And bleeding, on the earth He made.

And make me feel it was my sin,
As though no other sins there were,
That was to Him who bears the world
A load that He could scarcely bear.

Faber.

“IT IS FINISHED.”

There is another aspect in which we may regard these words as spoken also for others. The way in which our Redeemer contemplated this life was altogether a peculiar one. He looked upon it, not as a place of rest or pleasure, but simply, solely, as a place of duty. He was here to do His Father's will, not His own ; and therefore now that life was closed, He looked upon it chiefly as a duty that was fulfilled. We have the meaning of this in the seventeenth Chapter of this Gospel : “ I have glorified Thee

on earth ; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." The duty is done, the work is finished. Let us each apply this to ourselves. The hour is coming to ourselves ; indeed it is, perhaps, *now* come. The dark night settles down on each day.

"It is finished." We are ever taking leave of something that will not come back again. We let go, with a pang, portion after portion of our existence. However dreary we may have felt life to be here, yet when that hour comes—the winding-up of all things ; the last grand rush of darkness on our spirits ; the hour of that awful sudden wrench from all we have ever known or loved ; the long farewell to sun, moon, stars, and light—humbly and fearfully, *what* will then be finished ? When it is finished, what will it be ? Will it be the butterfly existence of pleasure, the mere life of science, a life of uninterrupted sin and selfish gratification ; or will it be, "Father, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do ?"

Robertson.

Oh, break, oh, break, hard heart of mine !
Thy weak self-love and guilty pride
His Pilate and His Judas were ;
Jesus, our Love, is crucified !

Come, take thy stand beneath the Cross,
And let the Blood from out that side
Fall gently on thee, drop by drop ;
Jesus, our Love, is crucified !

A broken heart, a fount of tears,
Ask, and they will not be denied ;
A broken heart love's cradle is ;
Jesus, our Love, is crucified !

O Love of God ! O sin of man !
In this dread act your strength is tried ;
And victory remains with love,
For He, our Love, is crucified !

Faber.

Easter Even.

The Sepulchre.



AND, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor ; and he was a good man and a just : (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them ;) he was of Arimathæa, a city of the Jews : who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.

And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments ; and rested the Sabbath day, according to the commandment.

Easter Even.

The Dead in Christ.

“O dearest dead ! to heaven
With grudging sighs we gave you,
To Him—be doubts forgiven !—
Who took you there to save you.
O give us grace to love
Their memories, yet more kindly,
Pine for our homes above,
And trust to Thee more blindly.”



HIS is a day for memories of the past, the stillness and the solitude aid the mind to restore scenes and events long gone by. Our Saviour should reign supreme in these recollections ; our walk through life should be with Him ; He should be the prominent figure

in all our musings. But at His side walk some whose lives were ever sanctified by His presence and His love, and whose deaths did not divide them from Him. Yes ; on this still Sabbath, we may think on the Dead in Christ : in attending our Saviour's tomb, we may think on their funeral days, and remember, as they dropped one by one into the grave by His side, how we wept over them ; and yet remember, as their virtues, their graces, their worth, passed in review before us, we could but feel that they were leaving a world which was not worthy of them, to join a Saviour, who, to purchase their salvation, was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; who had borne their griefs and carried their sorrows ; who was stricken, smitten, afflicted ; who was wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities ; and who, having passed through the dark valley of the shadow of death, has prepared a place more fit for their abode. Write, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors." "O death ! Where is thy sting ? O grave ! Where is thy victory ? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Hook.

"It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

The primroses with kindly gleam
Are looking out from bower and brake ;
As bright and quiet all things seem
As if no heart on earth could ache.

Yet He, the Sun who yester eve
Set in that wild tempestuous gloom,
When graves flew wide, and rocks were riven,
Still lingers in the dreary tomb.

Nor blame our peace ; for He will rise,
His veil for evermore withdrawn !
O never yet shone vernal skies
So pure as shall to-morrow dawn.

'Tis in that faith the flowers of earth
Their very best make speed to wear,
And e'en the funeral mound gives birth
To wild thyme fresh and violets fair.

Keble.

Of the intermediate state the notices in Holy Scripture are few, I apprehend, in number, and scanty in their record of particulars ; but they are enough, both in number and circumstances, to enable us to form a notion of that state, as a state of repose and enjoyment to the righteous ;

though probably, not of that perfect and supreme enjoyment which will be allotted to them at the resurrection of the just.

That the intermediate state of the righteous will be one of *repose* from the sufferings that mortality is heir to may be thought sufficiently plain from the declaration of St. John in the Revelation : "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth ; yea, saith the Spirit ; that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them." Thus we understand that to those who "die in the Lord," their death will be the introduction to a state of undisturbed tranquillity ; they will "rest from their labors." That it will be their introduction to a state of enjoyment also, may perhaps be inferred from the ensuing clause, namely, "and their works do follow them ;" that is, the rewards consequent on their former "works." But we may perceive, more clearly, in other passages (St. Luke xvi. 23 ; St. Luke xxii. 43 ; 2 Cor. v. 8 ; Phil. i. 21-24 ; 2 Tim. iv. 8), a foundation for the opinion, that the righteous will enter upon a state of enjoyment immediately after their dissolution. . . . From which passages we collect, that the intermediate state of the souls of the righteous is one of rest and repose ; not,

however, of insensibility, but of consciousness, and of positive and great enjoyment. Still that it will be succeeded by another state of yet superior happiness, when "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed;" and when the "crown of righteousness" heretofore "laid up" for "all those who love the Lord's appearing," shall be "given to them by the Lord, the righteous Judge," in the presence of assembled men and angels, "on that day."

This view of the intermediate state of the righteous, altogether at variance as it is with the doctrine of purgatory, one of the gratuitous assumptions and unscriptural tenets of the Romish Church, is well represented by our own scriptural Church; whose words, in the last collect but one of her "Order for the Burial of the Dead," may be here conveniently cited, as containing an excellent exposition of the doctrine of Holy Writ on the present subject.

"Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, *are in joy and felicity*; we give Thee hearty thanks for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world; beseech-

ing Thee, that it may please Thee of Thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect, and to hasten Thy Kingdom; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of Thy holy name, may have our *perfect consummation and bliss*, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"

Bishop Mant.

Hail, heavenly voice, once heard in Patmos! "Write Henceforth the dead who die in Christ are blest;
 Yea, saith the Spirit, for they now shall rest
 From all their labors!" But no dull dark night
 That rest o'ershadows; 'tis the dayspring bright
 Of bliss; the foretaste of a richer feast;
 A sleep, if sleep it be, of lively zest,
 Peopled with visions of intense delight.
 And though the secrets of that resting place
 The soul embodied knows not; yet she knows
 No sin is there God's likeness to deface,
 To stint His love no purgatorial woes;
 Her dross is left behind, nor mixture base
 Mars the pure stream of her serene repose.

Bishop Mant.

"**Years** fly, O Lord! And every year
 More desolate I grow;
 My world of friends thins round me fast,
 Love after love lies low.

There are fresh gaps around the hearth,
Old places left unfilled,
And young lives quenched before the old,
And the love of old hearts chilled

Dear voices and dear faces missed ;
Sweet households overthrown ;
And what is left, more sad to see
Than the sight of what has gone.

All this is to be sanctified,
This rupture with the past :
For thus we die before our deaths
And so die well at last."

Faber.

The land beyond the Sea !
When will life's task be o'er ?
When shall we reach that soft blue shore,
O'er the dark strait whose billows foam and roar ?
When shall we come to thee,
Calm Land beyond the Sea ?

The Land beyond the Sea !
How close it often seems,
When flushed with evening's peaceful gleams ;
And the wistful heart looks o'er the strait, and dreams !
It longs to fly to thee,
Calm Land beyond the Sea !

The Land beyond the Sea !
Sometimes distinct and near
It grows upon the eye and ear,

And the gulf narrows to a threadlike mere ;
We seem half way to thee,
Calm Land beyond the Sea !

The Land beyond the Sea !
Sometimes across the strait,
Like a drawbridge to a castle gate,
The slanting sunbeams lie, and seem to wait
For us to pass to thee,
Calm Land beyond the Sea .

The Land beyond the Sea !
O how the lapsing years,
Mid our not unsubmissive tears,
Have borne, now singly, now in fleets, the biers
Of those we love, to thee,
Calm Land beyond the Sea !

The Land beyond the Sea !
How dark our present home !
By the dull beach and sullen foam
How wearily, how drearily we roam,
With arms outstretched to thee,
Calm Land beyond the Sea !

The Land beyond the Sea !
When will our toil be done ?
Slow-footed years ! more swiftly run
Into the gold of that unsetting sun !
Homesick we are for thee,
Calm Land beyond the Sea !

The Land beyond the Sea !
Why fadest thou in light ?

Why art thou better seen towards night ?
Dear Land ! look always plain, look always bright,
That we may gaze on thee,
Calm Land beyond the Sea !

The Land beyond the Sea !
Sweet is thine endless rest,
But sweeter far that Father's Breast,
Upon thy shores eternally possess ;
For Jesus reigns o'er thee.
Calm Land beyond the Sea !

Easter Day.

The Resurrection.



HE first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him."

Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together ; and the other disciple did outrun

Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise from the dead.

Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

And they say unto her, "Woman, why weep-est thou?"

She saith unto them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus saith unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?"

She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away."

Jesus saith unto her, "Mary."

She turned herself, and saith unto Him, "Rabboni," which is to say, "Master."

Jesus saith unto her, "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, 'I ascend unto My Father, and your Father, and to My God, and your God.'"

Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her.

Easter Day.

Resurgam.

Alleluia ! Alleluia !

Finished is the battle now ;
The Crown is on the victor's brow !
Hence with sadness,
Sing with gladness,
Alleluia !

Alleluia ! Alleluia !
After sharp death that Him befell,
Jesus Christ hath harrowed hell.
Earth is singing,
Heaven is ringing,
Alleluia !

Alleluia ! Alleluia !
On the third morning He arose,
Bright with victory o'er His foes.
Sing we lauding,
And applauding,
Alleluia !

Alleluia ! Alleluia !
 He hath closed Hell's brazen door,
 And Heaven is open evermore !
 Hence with sadness,
 Sing with gladness,
 Alleluia !

Alleluia ! Alleluia !
 Lord, by Thy wounds we call on Thee,
 So from ill death to set us free,
 That our living,
 Be Thanksgiving !

Alleluia !

Mediæval Hymns. Neale.



T is a dark prospect. Human history behind, and human history before, both give a stern "No" in reply to the question, "Shall we rise again?"

Six thousand years of human existence have passed away,—countless armies of the dead have set sail from the shores of time. No traveller has returned from the still land beyond. More than one hundred and fifty generations have done their work, and sunk into the dust again, and still there is not a voice, there is not a whisper, from the grave, to tell us whether, indeed, those myriads are in existence still. Besides, why should they be? Talk as you will of the grandeur of man, why should it not be honor enough for him—more than enough, to satisfy

a thing so mean—to have had his twenty or seventy years' life-rent of God's universe? Why must such a thing, apart from proof, rise up and claim to himself an exclusive immortality? Man's majesty! Man's worth!—the difference between him and the elephant or the ape is too degradingly small to venture much on. That is not all; instead of looking backwards, now look forwards. The wisest thinkers tell us that there are already on the globe traces of a demonstration that the human race is drawing to its close. Each of the great human family has had its day, its infancy, its manhood, its decline. The two last races that have not been tried are on the stage of earth, doing their work now. There is no other to succeed them. Man is but of yesterday, and yet his race is well-nigh done. Man is wearing out, as everything before him has been worn out. In a few more centuries the crust of earth will be the sepulchre of the race of man, as it has been the sepulchre of extinct races of palm-trees, and ferns, and gigantic reptiles. . . .

Now look at all this without Christ, and tell us whether it be possible to escape such misgivings and such reasonings as these, which rise out of such an aspect of things. Man, this thing of yesterday, which sprung out of the eternal nothingness, why may he not sink, after he has

played his appointed part, into nothingness again? You see the leaves sinking one by one in autumn, till the heaps below are rich with the spoils of a whole year's vegetation. They were bright and perfect while they lasted, each leaf a miracle of beauty and contrivance. There is no resurrection for the leaves,—why must there be one for man? Go and stand some summer evening, by the river side: you will see the May-fly sporting out its little hour, in dense masses of insect-life, darkening the air a few feet above the gentle swell of the water. The heat of that very afternoon brought them into existence. Every gauze wing is traversed by ten thousand fibres, which defy the microscope to find a flaw in their perfection. The omniscience and the care bestowed upon that exquisite anatomy, one would think, cannot be destined to be wasted in a moment. Yet so it is. When the sun has sunk below the trees, its little life is done. Yesterday it was not; to-morrow it will not be. God has bidden it be happy for one evening. It has no right or claim to a second; and in the universe, that marvellous life has appeared once, and will appear no more. May not the race of man sink like the generations of the May-fly? Why cannot the Creator, so lavish in His resources, afford to annihilate souls as He annihilates in-

sects? Would it not almost enhance His glory to believe it?

That, brethren, is the question, and nature has no reply. The fearful secret of sixty centuries has not yet found a voice. The whole evidence lies before us. We know what the greatest and wisest have had to say in favor of an immortality; and we know how, after eagerly devouring all their arguments, our hearts have sunk back in cold disappointment; and to every proof as we read, our lips have replied, mournfully, That will not stand. Search through tradition, history, the world within you and the world without—except in Christ, there is not the shadow of a shade of proof that man survives the grave.

I do not wonder that Thomas, with that honest, accurate mind of his, wishing that the news were true, yet dreading lest it should be false, and determined to guard against every possible delusion and deception, said, so strongly, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe."

"Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." This text tells us of two kinds of proof. The first is the evidence

of the senses. The other is the evidence of the spirit.

Let us scrutinize the external evidence of Christ's resurrection, which those verses furnish. It is a twofold evidence. The witness of the Apostle Thomas, who was satisfied with the proofs ; the witness of St. John, who records the circumstance of his satisfaction. Consider first the witness of St. John ; try it by ordinary rules. Hearsay evidence, which comes second-hand, is suspicious, but John's is no distant, hearsay story. He does not say that he had heard the story from Thomas, and that years afterwards, when the circumstances had lost their exact, sharp outline, he had penned it down, when he was growing old, and his memory might be failing. John was present the whole time. All the Apostles were there ; they all watched the result with eager interest. The conditions made by Thomas, without which he would not believe, had been made before them all. They all heard him say that the demonstration was complete ; they all saw him touch the wounds, and St. John recorded what he saw. Now, a scene like that is one of those solemn ones in a man's life which cannot be forgotten ; it graves itself on the memory. A story told us by another may be unintentionally altered or exaggerated in the repeti-

tion ; but a spectacle like this, so strange and so solemn, could not be forgotten or misinterpreted. St. John could have made no mistake. Estimate next the worth of the witness of Thomas ; try it by the ordinary rules of life. Evidence is worth little if it is the evidence of credulity. If you find a man believing every new story, and accepting every fresh discovery, so called, without scrutiny, you may give him credit for sincerity ; you cannot rest much upon his judgment ; his testimony cannot go for much. . . .

Now, the resurrection of Christ does not stand on such a footing. There was one man who dreaded the possibility of delusion, however credulous the others might be. He resolved beforehand that only one proof should be decisive. He would not be contented with seeing Christ ; that might be a dream,—it might be the vision of a disordered fancy. He would not be satisfied with the assurance of others. The evidence of testimony which he did reject was very strong. Ten of his most familiar friends, and certain women, gave in their separate and their united testimony ; but against all that St. Thomas held out sceptically firm. They might have been deceived themselves ; they might have been trifling with him. The possibilities of mistake were innumerable ; the delusions of the best men about

what they see are incredible. He would trust a thing so infinitely important to nothing but his own scrutinizing hand. It might be some one personating his Master. He would put his hands into real wounds, or else hold it unproved. The allegiance which was given in so enthusiastically, "My Lord and my God," was given in after and not before scrutiny. It was the cautious verdict of an enlightened, suspicious, most earnest and most honest sceptic.

Try the evidence next by character. Blemished character damages evidence. Now, the only charge that was ever heard against the Apostle John was that he loved a world which hated him. The character of the Apostle Thomas is that he was a man cautious in receiving evidence, and most rigorous in exacting satisfactory proof, but ready to act upon his conviction, when once made, even to the death. Love elevated above the common love of man, in the one,—heroic conscientiousness and a most rare integrity, in the other,—who impeaches that testimony?

Once more,—any possibility of interested motives will discredit evidence. Ask we the motive of John or Thomas for this strange tale? John's reward,—a long and solitary banishment to the mines of Patmos. The gain and bribe which tempted Thomas,—a lonely pilgrimage to the

far East, and death at the last in India. Those were strange motives to account for their persisting and glorying in the story of the resurrection to the last! Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price!

The evidence to which Thomas yielded, was the evidence of the senses,—touch, and sight, and hearing. Now, the feeling which arose from this touching, and feeling, and demonstration, Christ pronounced to be faith: “Thomas, because thou hast seen thou hast believed.” There are some Christian writers who tell us that the conviction produced by the intellect or the senses is not faith; but Christ says it is. Observe then, it matters not *how* faith comes,—whether through the intellect, as in the case of St. Thomas, or in the heart, as in the case of St. John, or as the result of long education, as in the case of St. Peter. God has many ways of bringing different characters to faith; but that blessed thing which the Bible calls faith is a state of the soul in which the things of God become glorious certainties. It was not faith which assured Thomas that what stood before him was the Christ he had known; that was sight. But it was faith, which from the visible enabled him to pierce up to the truth invisible: “My Lord and my God.” And it was faith which enabled him, through all life

after, to venture everything on that conviction, and live for One who had died for him.

Remark again this: The faith of Thomas was not merely satisfaction about a fact; it was trust in a Person. The admission of a fact, however sublime, is not faith; we may believe that Christ is risen, yet not be nearer heaven. It is a Bible fact that Lazarus rose from the grave; but belief in Lazarus' resurrection does not make the soul better than it was. Thomas passed on from the fact of the resurrection to the person of the risen: "My Lord and my God." Trust in the risen Saviour—that was the belief which saved his soul.

And that is our salvation too. You may satisfy yourself about the evidences of the resurrection; you may bring in your verdict well, like a cautious and enlightened judge; you are then in possession of a fact, a most valuable and curious fact; but faith of any saving worth you have not, unless from the fact you pass on, like Thomas, to cast the allegiance and the homage of your soul, and the love of all your being, on Him whom Thomas worshipped. It is not belief about the Christ, but personal trust in the Christ of God, that saves the soul.

There is another kind of evidence by which the resurrection becomes certain. Not the evi-

dence of the senses, but the evidence of the spirit: "Blessed are they which have not seen and yet have believed." There are thousands of Christians, who have never examined the evidence of the Resurrection piece by piece; they are incapable of estimating it if they did examine; they know nothing about the laws of evidence; they have had no experience in balancing the value of testimony; they are neither lawyers nor philosophers; and yet these simple Christians have received into their very souls the Resurrection of their Redeemer, and look forward to their own rising from the grave with a trust as firm, as steady, and as saving as if they had themselves put their hands into His wounds.

They have never seen, they know nothing of proofs and miracles, yet they believe, and are blessed. How is this?

I reply, there is an inward state of heart which makes truth credible the moment it is stated. It is credible to some men, because of what they are. Love is credible to a loving heart; purity is credible to a pure mind; life is credible to a spirit in which life ever beats strongly; it is incredible to other men. Because of that such men believe. Of course, that inward state could not reveal a fact like the resur-

rection ; but it can receive the fact the moment it is revealed without requiring evidence. The love of St. John himself never could discover a resurrection ; but it made a resurrection easily believed, when the man of intellect, St. Thomas, found difficulties. Therefore, "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," and therefore "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself," and therefore "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." Now, it is of such a state—a state of love and hope, which makes the Divine truth credible and natural at once—that Jesus speaks : "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

There are men in whom the resurrection *begun* makes the resurrection credible. In them the spirit of the risen Saviour works already ; and they have mounted with Him from the grave. They have risen out of the darkness of doubt, and are expatiating in the brightness and the sunshine of a Day in which God is ever Light. Their step is as free as if the clay of the sepulchre had been shaken off, and their hearts are lighter than those of other men, and there is in them an unearthly triumph which they are unable to express. They have risen above the narrowness of life, and all that is petty and

ungenerous and mean. They have risen above fear,—they have risen above self. In the New Testament, that is called the spiritual resurrection, or being risen with Christ ; and the man in whom all that is working has got something more blessed than external evidence to rest upon. He has the witness in himself ; he has not seen, and yet he has believed ; he believed in a resurrection, because he has the resurrection in himself. The resurrection, in all its heavenliness and unearthly elevation, has begun within his soul ; and he knows, as clearly as if he had demonstration, that it must be developed in an eternal life.

Now, this is the higher and nobler kind of faith,—a faith more blessed than that of Thomas. “Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed.” There are times when we envy, as possessed of higher privileges, those who saw Christ in the flesh ; we think, that if we could have heard that calm voice, or seen that blessed presence, or touched those lacerated wounds in His sacred flesh, all doubt would be set at rest for ever. Therefore, these words must be our corrective. God has granted us the possibility of believing in a more trustful and generous way than if we *saw*. To believe, not because we are learned and can prove, but because there is a something

in us, even God's own Spirit, which makes us feel light as light, and truth as true,—that is the blessed faith.

Blessed, because it carries with it spiritual elevation of character. Narrow the prospects of man to this time-world, and it is impossible to escape the conclusions of the Epicurean sensualist. If to-morrow we die, let us eat and drink to-day. If we die the sinner's death, it becomes a matter of mere taste whether we shall live the sinner's life or not. But, if our existence is for ever, then plainly, that which is to be daily subdued and subordinated is the animal within us ; that which is to be cherished is that which is likest God within us,—which we have from Him, and which is the sole pledge of eternal being in spirit-life.

Robertson.

Be still, my heart ! Upon thy stress and strife,
Wrestling with fears that crowd thee from the grave,
— Christ breathes this sovereign spell to make thee brave,
“ I am the Resurrection and the life.”

His whispered “ Peace ” to storm-vexed Galilee
Hushed every wave as in a holy sleep ;
In holier calm his words to Martha steep
The surging floods of Death's tumultuous sea.

My narrow house within lie shadows rife,
And I shrink back from its half-open door ;
Till Faith discerns Christ's inscript on its floor,—
"I am the Resurrection and the life."

O words divine ! the tomb of Lazarus heard
Your first evangel, and gave up its dead ;
Thence, evermore, your echoes shall outspread,
Till all the dust of men to life is stirred.

To life, once more, the dust of all the dead,
Flushed with the breath of Christ's command, shall rise.
All is not o'er when shut these mortal eyes ;
The race not run when earth's few steps are sped.

O ! to lie down with darkness and the worm,
For these to fold and fasten on, for prey,
The god-like powers of my strong soul to-day,
Were fear to toss me with relentless storm.

Upon this storm, to quell its deadly strife,
And make the grave the gate of heaven appear,
With rainbow hues the omnific words shine clear,—
"I am the Resurrection and the life."

Now need I yet but loving faith alone
In Him who spoke those words of power divine—
To make His Life and Resurrection mine,
Beyond the grave, and spite of cumbering stone.

My narrow house no more with gloom is rife,
When Faith and Love beside its portals sit,
And with my Saviour's words illumine it—
"I am the Resurrection and the life."

"Littell's Living Age."

~~We~~ We assume then, in the first place, that the apparent import of some passages and phrases of Scripture tends to suggest the belief that the die of human nature, as to its form and figure, is to be used again in a new world. Partly on the ground of inferences from general principles, and partly on the strength of particular assertions, we suppose that the fair and faultless paradisiacal model of human beauty and majesty, which stood forward as the most illustrious instance of creative wisdom—the bright gem of the visible world—this form too, which has been borne and consecrated by incarnate deity—that it shall at length regain its forfeited honors, and once more be pronounced “very good ;” so good as to forbid its being superseded ; on the contrary, that it shall be reinstated and allowed, after its long degradation, to enjoy its birthright of immortality.

It is true, indeed, that the inspired writers put a disparagement upon those adventitious recommendations of the person to which, in our fondness and folly, we are prone to attach an inordinate importance. Nevertheless, while they do so, they are far from using the style of cynics, or of stoics ; much less do they, like the atheist, throw contempt upon human nature, or spurn the conditions of the animal and social economy,

or pride themselves, like the mystic, upon a sovereign disdain of all ordinary motives and affections. Nothing of this sort do we meet with in the Scriptures: on the contrary, not merely the prophets and poets of the Old Testament, but our Lord and His Apostles, uniformly treat with a grave respect whatever is part and parcel of human nature:—a respect well becoming devout minds, which are apt to discern, and are prepared to reverence the Creator in all His works. From the general tone of the inspired persons we might gather the opinion that in speaking of the human body, they, with a prophetic eye, beheld it as destined to a new and permanent glory, and as intended to stand as the image of God, freed from distortions and blemishes, and exempt from decay.

Isaac Taylor.

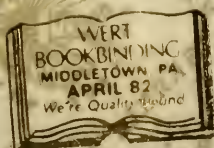
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